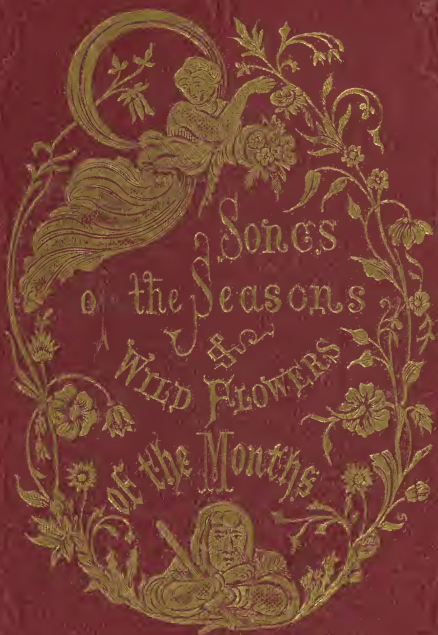


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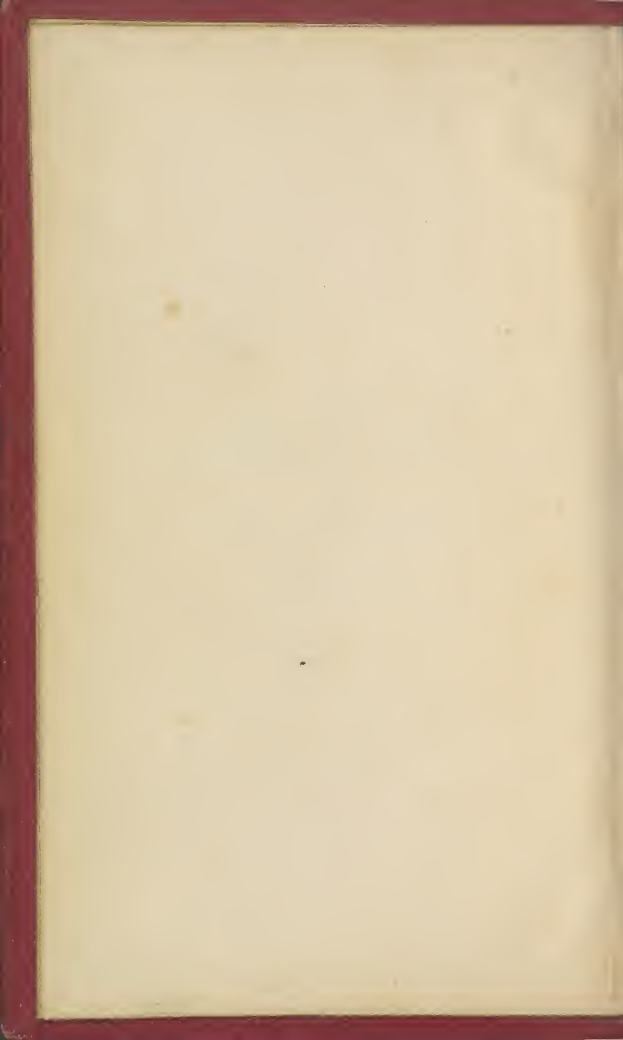
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THE
SONGS OF THE SEASONS,
AND
WILD FLOWERS OF THE MONTHS.

BY J. H. CLARK.







EYE BRIGHT, WILD GERANIUM & SUN FLOWER

The
SONGS OF THE SEASONS
AND
WILD FLOWERS OF THE MONTHS



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"WILD FLOWERS!"

I love right well
To visit where ye dwell
on mountain, valley, or in woody bowers

HALIFAX,

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1850.

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200
THE
SONGS OF THE SEASONS,

AND
WILD FLOWERS OF THE MONTHS;

202¹ OR, THE

BRITISH WILD FLOWERS

FAMILIARLY DESCRIBED UNDER THE MONTHS
IN WHICH THEY BLOOM,

AND
THE LOCALITIES IN WHICH THEY GROW:

INTERSPERSED WITH ILLUSTRATIVE POETRY SELECTED
FROM FAVORITE AUTHORS. //

2501
BY J. H. CLARK. //

There is a lesson in each flower,
A story in each stream and bower;
In every herb on which you tread
Are written words, which rightly read,
Will lead you from earth's fragrant sod,
To hope, and holiness, and God.

ALLEN CUNNINGHAM.

HALIFAX:

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CHEAPSIDE.

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PREFACE.



It is necessary to say a few words by way of apology for bringing before the public this little work on the flowers of our native land, when so many talented and beautiful volumes are already published on this interesting subject.

The descriptions set forth in the following pages were originally written for the purpose of initiating a friend in the study of our native plants. It has since been re-written and extended, by interspersing it with choice and appropriate selections from the poets, so as to render it interesting and instructive to those fond of flowers, but who have not hitherto made them their study.

The main object in publishing this work has been to elevate, entertain and delight those in a humble walk of life, to whom the more costly volumes are unattainable. The descriptions of the flowers, their localities and habits, are set forth in a clear and simple style. Scientific terms

are discarded as much as possible, so that the subject may not involve the readers in a labyrinth, but lead them gradually to take an interest in the inspection of the component parts of a plant, and prepare the way to other works.

Where scientific terms are made use of, they are followed by proper explanations, or so inserted that the general reader may pass them over without injury to the sentence. At the end of each month a list of the flowers in bloom at the time is given, with their botanical names and places of growth attached, so as to make the book an instructive and useful pocket companion for the beginner, and one of reference to the more experienced botanist.

INTRODUCTION.

“ ’Tis fair to see our cultured buds their shining tints
unfold,
In leaves that wear the sapphire’s hue, or mock the
sunset’s gold.
The lily’s grace, the rose’s blush, have drawn the ad-
miring gaze,
And won from many a minstrel harp the meed of song
and praise ;
Oh ! they are meet for festal halls, or beauty’s courtly
bowers :
For those I love the wreath shall be of wild and
woodland flowers.

“ Bright clustering in the forest shade, or springing
from the sod,
As flung from Eden, forth they came, fresh from the
hand of God ;
No human care hath nurtur’d them, the wild wind
passeth by ;
They flourish in the sunshine gleam, and tempest
clouded sky :
And oh ! like every gift that He, the bountiful, hath
given,
Their treasures fall alike to all, type of his promised
heaven.

"They bear to us sweet memories of childhood's
happy years,
Ere grief had wrung the heart with pain, or dimmed
the eye with tears ;
They have been twined with playfulness round many
a sunny brow,
Where costly pearls and Indian gems are proudly
flashing now ;
But hiding many a line of care, beneath their gorge-
ous blaze,
That lurk'd not 'neath the wild flower wreath of
youth's untroubled days.

" Oh ! chide not at the simple theme that wakes the
minstrel's lay,
Earth were less bright without the flowers that blos-
som by the way ;
He at whose word the universe her ancient might did
yield,
Hath taught proud man a lesson from the lilies of
the field.
I thank thee, God ! for every boon thy hand in mercy
shows,
And oh ! not least among the gifts, the beautiful wild
flowers."

OF all the studies which occupy the mind, that
of Botany is the most healthy as well as the most
interesting ; for the vegetation which everywhere
covers and adorns the face of the ground, from
the moss which stretches itself over the surface of
the weather-worn stone, to the stately oak that
rules as monarch of the wood, is replete with
matter for reflection and admiration ;—not a tree
that waves its branches on high, nor a flower or

leaf that expands and stretches beneath the sunlight, but has something in its habit or structure, form, fragrance, or colour, to attract the attention, and afford us

“Midst nature’s revels sports that never cloy.”

Few sciences are attended with circumstances equally pleasing in their pursuit, few can boast of that infinite variety of objects, and invite us to pleasures equally rational and innocent, as this science; and a knowledge of it gives new life to the scenery of nature, and administers many sources of delight. In walking along the green pastures and the shady lanes, we see the great number of plants that lie scattered in our way, but how many pass heedlessly by them, and little think what pleasure they bestow on a portion of mankind—those who view them with a scientific eye to discover the connecting links.

Independent of the propriety of the creature admiring the works of his beneficent Creator, and of the advantages resulting to the individual who attaches himself to this study “as enlarging the understanding, and rendering his mind more orderly in every concern of life, and his senses more acute,” he will find also that there results from the pursuit of Botany the most heartfelt satisfaction. In this occupation it is that the violent passions are lulled to rest, and only so much of emotion produced as is sufficient to render life happy and agreeable; for at every turn the

lover of the wildlings of nature pleasantly glides from object to object; each flower he reviews excites in him curiosity and interest, and in every wood and brake—on each hedge and bank—in the shady dell—on the bleak mountain-top—on the edges of the babbling brook—on the silent lake—he finds something to attract and please—an old friend in every step, for

“ Flowers are the brightest things which earth
On her broad bosom loves to cherish;
Gay they appear as childhood’s mirth,
Like fading dreams of hope they perish.

“ In every clime, in every age,
Mankind have felt their pleasing sway;
And lays to them have deck’d the page
Of moralist—and minstrel gay.

“ By them the lover tells his tale,
They can his hopes, his fears express;
The maid, when words or looks would fail,
Can thus a kind return confess.

“ They wreath the harp at banquets tried,
With them we crown the crested brave;
They deck the maid—adorn the bride,
Or form the chaplets of her grave.”

PATERSON.

It appears to the uninitiated to impart new sense to those who possess a competent knowledge of a science that enables them at a glance to class a plant or a flower, never beheld before, in its

proper order ; and confers to the cultivator of a garden a greater share of pleasure to that experienced by those who are totally unacquainted with the names of the component parts of a plant, and the rules by which one plant is distinguished from another.

To persons engrossed in the cares and anxieties of business, this study affords a pleasing, instructive, and healthy recreation during their leisure hours, and induces them to quit their couch to walk forth in the pure atmosphere—cheers their spirits, and invites them to a contemplation of the wonderful works of the Creator ; and next to the devout exercises of religion, perhaps nothing will more completely remove sadness and disquietude than the silent eloquence of flowers, and the vocal music of birds.

As we proceed in the contemplation of the works of nature, her beauties are gradually unfolded to our view, as if she were pleased that her works had excited our wonder and admiration : the study of them is unbounded, for the objects she presents to our notice are infinite, unceasing and delightful—so vast a profusion of beauty, contrivance, and design, as is seen exhibited by nature, multiplies greatly the inlets to knowledge and to happiness.

There is a numerous class of minds that seem to find no delight in the works of the Creator, unless in as far as they discover a manifest utility

in their existence. "What use does it serve?" is the test by which each is measured; but they who would thus gauge the Almighty's works by a dry utilitarian law, altogether forget that He who, as His noblest work on earth, has created man an intelligent being, endowed with faculties capable of appreciating and deriving enjoyments from the beautiful as well as from the true, is only carrying out His design in clothing the earth with beauty, and peopling hedge-row, and meadow, and heath, with endless varieties of life and form.

"By cooling streams and softening showers,
The vegetable race are fed;
And trees and plants, and herbs and flowers
Their Maker's bounty smiling spread.

"The flow'ry tribes all blooming rise
Above the vain attempts of art;
Their bright inimitable dyes
Speak sweet conviction to the heart."

"Consider the lilies of the field," says our Lord; but it is not to discover into what useful tissues they may be woven, or for what valuable uses they are applicable, but to derive a far higher lesson of benevolence and love, from the glory of their unwoven raiment, and to learn from thence how infinite His power who thus scatters wild and free over the uncultivated face of nature so abundant a garland of beauty for its robe.

“The fruitful tree, the blooming flower,
In varied charms appear;
Their varied charms declare Thy power,
Thy goodness all declare.

“The fragrant, the refreshing breath
In every flow’ry bloom;
In balmy whispers owns from Thee
Its pleasing odours come.”

To such as we have spoken of, it might suffice that the earth were one monotonous tract of hemp and grain; that the forest should spring up without a leaf,—the meadow exchange its daisy and cowslip for the ripening hay, and all nature be reduced to a methodic storehouse. It is true that early and constant familiarity has a tendency to render us unobservant of that which surrounds us; but the individual must be idle, and ignorant as idle, whose curiosity cannot be awakened by a description of the wonderful mechanism and adaptations of vegetable life.

“Blessed be God for flowers!
For the bright, gentle, holy thoughts they breathe,
From out their odorous beauty, like a wreath
Of sunshine in life’s hours.”

The study of plants as a science finds her charms upon the suffrages of society; who is so insensible, so cold to the charms of beauty, grace, odour, tint, and elegance of form, as to disregard the attractions of the vegetable world? Even the

most unyielding temperament is frequently subdued by the charms of rural scenery.

It is plants that invest nature with charms—clothes with beauty the world around us, presenting a rich and variegated array—that spread pleasure around our habitation. We admire them in the verdure of the fields,—in the flowers that enliven the road sides—in the trees that adorn the prospect. We welcome re-animating nature in the opening buds of Spring, and to those expanded by the genial warmth of the sun, the Summer owes its bloom.

There is nothing more likely to produce kindly emotions in the breast than the love of flowers. Dr. Johnson says, “a man finds in the productions of nature an inexhaustible stock of materials upon which he can employ himself without any temptations to envy or malevolence; and has always a certain prospect of discovering reasons for adoring the Sovereign Author of the universe;” and the Botanist may exclaim in the words of the poet—

“There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society where none intrudes,
By the deep sea, and music in it roar:
I love not man the less, but nature more.”

In a walk by the wood-side, through a lane,
over a heath, how much more of enjoyment shall

he receive who brings with him only a slight acquaintance with this subject, than he can hope to experience to whom in this respect, the book of nature is a sealed volume.

“Then gentle lady cherish flowers,
True fairy friends are they,
On whom, of all thy cloudless hours,
Not one is thrown away.

“By them, unlike man’s ruder race,
No care conferred is spurned,
But all thy fond and fostering grace
A thousand fold returned.

“The rose repays thee all thy smiles—
The stainless lily rears,
Dew in the chalice of its wiles
As sparkling as thy tears.

“The glances of thy gladden’d eyes
Not thanklessly are poured,
In the blue violet’s tender dyes
Behold them all restored.”

For us the rose kindly unfolds to our view her smiling colours; the pink at the same time flatters our sight and smell by its agreeable appearance and fragrance.

Alone in his room, or wandering far away from the haunts of mankind, a lover of flowers has always something around him, not only to occupy his thoughts, but to afford him gratification and pleasure—that pleasure which arises from the

occupation of the mind when devoted to a delightful study, and which cheers us with the conviction that our time is not unprofitably spent. But the pleasure is still heightened, if we ourselves have been instrumental in contributing to the happiness of our fellow creatures—if we have helped to raise a heart drooping beneath the weight of misfortune, and revived that barren spot where no water was, with the refreshing showers of love and kindness.

There are few natural objects more poetical than flowers—they are closely allied to poetry, and we believe there are few that love the one without admiring the other; nor has there ever been a poet, simple or sublime, that has not adorned his verse with these specimens of nature's cunning workmanship. From the majestic sunflower, towering above her sisters of the garden, and faithfully turning to welcome the god of day, to the little humble and well known weed, that closes its crimson eye before impending showers, there is scarcely one which may not from its loveliness, its perfume, its natural situation, or its classical association, be considered highly poetical.

It is not needful, however, that all should be naturalists to thus enjoy the works of creation, though none are incapable of so far being so as to derive an endless pleasure and profit from the observations they suggest; but its features are as various as the phases of the human mind, and its

powers of adaptation no less than the varieties that such may demand.

Whoever occupies himself with wild plants soon becomes interested in observing their places of growth, some of which are very constant. We do not expect to find the lily of the valley growing wild in any spot but the wood or the sheltered bank, and we do not look for the wood sorrel lifting up its pencilled head among the grass of the meadow—the yellow poppy of the sea-side never blooms by the edge of the silver streamlet, nor does the fair white water lily throw her shade upon the ocean: some plants, as the nettle tribe, will grow on any spot, while others are so tenacious of their native circumstances, as the heath, that no care will save them if transplanted.

“ When known to fame, but not to peace,
Alone, unfriended, worn with care,
The enthusiast bade his wanderings cease,
And breathed once more his native air,
And hail’d again the tranquil scene
Where once he rovd with brow serene.

“ The plant that bloom’d along the shore,
Where there in happier hours he stray’d
Still flourish’d gaily as before,
In all its azure charms array’d;
But still it shone in modest pride,
While all his flowers of joy had died.

“ It seem’d to say, ‘ Had’st thou, like me,
Contented bloom’d within the bed,

That nature's hand had form'd for thee,
 When first her dew's were on thee shed,
 Then had thy blossoms never known
 The blast that o'er thy buds have blown.'

"It seem'd to say, 'The loveliest flower
 That keeps unmoved its native sphere,
 May brave the seasons' changeful power,
 And live through many a stormy year;
 For mercy guides the fiercest gale,
 And halcyon skies again prevail.

"'Happy are those alone who aim
 In duty's quiet path to shine,
 And careless of the meed of fame,
 Unseen their fairest garlands twine;
 Whilst He whose eye in secret sees
 To them the amaranth crown decrees.' "

So dear and charming are flowers, that one readily imagines every body *must* love them; and well and beautifully has it been said of them, that they seem the true philosophers of their race, for

"Not a tree,
 A plant, a leaf, a blossom, but contains
 A folio volume. We may read, and read,
 And read again, and still find something new,
 Something to please, and something to instruct,
 E'en in the noisome weed."

Their generous and cheerful faces ever give a kindly greeting to the troops of merry village children who revel in their blossomy wealth; and right welcome are they gladdening the eyes of the

poor mechanic when he breathes the pure fresh country air on Sunday, and gathers a handful of gay cowslips and gaudy daffodils, and prouder foxgloves, to carry home for his window; or selects the modest violet and meek-eyed forget-me-not for his rustic vase.

“ Sweet nurslings of the vernal skies,
Bathed in soft air, and fed with dew,
What more than magic in you lies,
To fill the heart’s fond view ?
In childhood’s sports companions gay,
In sorrow on life’s downward way,
How soothing ! in our last decay
Memorials prompt and true.

“ Relicts ye are of Eden’s bowers,
As pure, as fragrant, and as fair
As when ye crown’d the sunshine hours
Of happy wanderers there.
Fallen all beside—the world of life,
How it is stained with fear and strife !
In reason’s world what storms are rife,
What passions rage and glare !

“ But cheerful and unchanged the while
Your first and perfect forms ye shew,
The same that won Eve’s matron smile
In the world’s opening glow.
The stars of heaven a course are taught,
Too high above our human thought,
Ye may be found if ye are sought,
And as we gaze we know.

“Ye dwell beside our paths and homes,
Our paths of sin, our homes of sorrow,
And guilty man where'er he roams,
Your innocent mirth may borrow.
The birds of air before us fleet,
They cannot brook our shame to meet—
But we may taste your solace sweet,
And come again to-morrow.

“Ye fearless in your nests abide—
Not may we scorn, too proudly wise,
Your silent lessons undescribed
By all but lowly eyes.
For ye could draw the admiring gaze
Of Him who worlds and hearts surveys;
Your order wild, your fragrant maze,
He taught us how to prize.

“Ye felt your Maker's smile that hour,
As when he paused and owned you good;
His blessings on earth's primal bower,
Ye felt it all renew'd.
What care ye now if winter's storm
Sweep ruthless o'er each silken form?
Christ's blessing at your head is warm,
Ye fear no vexing mood.

“Alas ! of thousand bosoms kind,
That daily court you and caress,
How few the happy secret find
Of your calm loveliness.
'Live for to-day !' to-morrow's light,
To-morrow's cares shall bring to sight;
Go sleep like closing flowers at night,
And Heaven thy morn will bless !”

KEBLE.

Sweet flowers! they come upon us in spring
like the recollections of a dream which hovered
above us in sleep, peopled with shadowy beauties
and purple delights, fancy broidered.

“Oh! they look upward in every place
Through this beautiful world of ours,
And dear as the smile on an old friend’s face,
Is the smile of the bright, bright flowers !
They tell us of wanderings by woods and streams,
They tell us of lanes and trees ;
But the children of showers and sunny beams
Have lovelier tales than these—
The bright, bright flowers !

“They tell of a season when men were not ;
When earth was by angels trod,
And leaves and flowers in every spot
Burst forth at the call of God :
When spirits singing their hymns at even,
Wandered by wood and glade,
And the Lord looked down from the highest Heaven,
And blessed what he had made—
The bright, bright flowers !

“That blessing remaineth on them still,
Though often the storm cloud lowers,
And frequent tempests may soil and chill
The gayest of earth’s flowers.
When Sin and Death, with their sister Grief,
Made a home of the hearts of men,
The blessing of each tender leaf
Preserved in their beauty then—
The bright, bright flowers !

“The liy is lovely as when it slept
On the waters of Eden’s lake,
The woodbine breathes sweetly as when it crept
In Eden from brake to brake.
They were left as proof of the loveliness
Of Adam and Eve’s first home ;
They are here as a type of the joys that bless
The first in the world to come—
The bright, bright flowers !

When we observe children rambling over the meadows picking the daisies that are thickly strewn around them, or running to the hedge banks to pluck the pale primrose from its retreat, and peeping with curious eyes for the sweet violet, we may well enjoy the sight ; for is it not charming to think that the pleasure derived from such sweet wild flowers is not confined to the wealthy, but spread open to the youngest and poorest of mankind—they are the patrimony of man : the woodland and the meadow—the mountain and valley graciously present him with their rich offerings. If birds are the poor man’s music, surely flowers are the poor man’s poetry. For him they are scattered over the bosom of the earth—bordering the foot-paths—adorning the hedge-rows of the lonely lane—smiling upon him in the shady wood—and in sweet clusters bedecking the meadow-banks. Each situation has its peculiar flower—the moist meadow and the mountain-top—the sunny bank and the shady grove—the river bank—the rivulet—the dingle,—each

send forth their floral ornaments. January has its snowdrops and July its roses,—February its crocuses and August flowers of every hue, and in the coldest weather the furze and magereow shoot forth their lovely blossoms.

From the rich inhabitant of a palace, who surveys her brilliant pleasure grounds and rich conservatory, where the fairest exotics are displayed, to the poor cottager, whose humble nursery of flowers forms her chief enjoyment; or the still more impoverished being, who, amidst the smoky atmosphere of a town, cherishes a single geranium, towards which, as a faint memorial of nature's beauties, she often casts a look of complacency—in every portion of the descending scale of society, as well as in the different stages of life, from the child who catches with animated eagerness the first bright flower placed within his reach, to the grandsire, who tranquilly paces his garden paths, and views the unfolding blossoms of spring, and describes their names and properties to the band of children that follow his footsteps and gambol around him, as he comments with joyous feelings upon the beauties and varieties of the sweet flowers that encompass them.—In the different conditions of health and disease, when the field, the grove, the lawn, are sought by the joyous and the gay; or when the single bouquet of flowers is placed near the bed of sickness, and lights up a smile of pleasure in the languid eyes

of the drooping invalid ; in all these, and numberless other portraits of life, the world of plants and flowers forms an accessory of the most impressive and interesting character.

From our very infancy they have ministered to our happiness, therefore can we praise and love them.

“ Flowers ! flowers ! bright, merry faced flowers !

I bless ye in joyous or saddened hours !

I love ye dearly,

Ye look so cheerly,

In summer, autumn, winter, or spring,

A flower to me is the loveliest thing

That hath its birth

On this chequered earth ;—

Oh ! who will not chorus the lay I sing ?

“ Flowers ! flowers ! who loveth them not ?

Who hath his childhood's sports forgot ?

When daisies white

And king-cups bright,

And cowslips, snowdrops, and daffodils,

Lured us to meadows and woods and rills ;

And we wandered on,

Till a wreath was won,

Of the heather bells crowning the far off hills.”

TWAMLEY.

Many who do not make plants a study, or who do not turn their attention to rearing them, are often inclined to listen to any general information respecting them ; and as the number of botanists is rapidly increasing, and exhibitions are annually

being held to offer the beautiful ornaments of the parterre to the public inspection, it is not surprising it carries with it an intellectual joy and improvement : but it is the botanist alone who knows the real pleasure derived from inspecting the construction of plants—in viewing the minute organs of these fair and exquisite productions of nature, and marking how well they are adapted to the purposes for which they are intended, and the delight experienced in traversing woods and vales in search of new varieties.

Beautiful gems ! how often ye have recalled us from the cares of every day life, to revel amongst nature's fairest beauties ! We almost tremble with joy at finding we are about to enter into such a scene of happiness as the contemplation of the daughters of Flora affords us. Does not the beauty of their rich blossoms tell us that they were painted by no earthly hand ? for

“ Who can paint
Like Nature ? Can imagination boast
Amid his gay creation, hues like these ?
And can he mix them with that matchless skill,
And lay them on so delicately fine,
And bow them to each other, as appears
In every bud that blows.”

Flowers are considered the sweetest of all nature's smiles : who does not love—what heart so callous to all feeling as not to yield to the bright influence of the children of showers and sunny

beams? and who having the slightest claims to be considered a poet, has not tuned his muse in praise of the God-enamelled flowers?

“Flowers have a soul in every leaf.”

MOORE.

Who then would wish to be without them,—to live without flowers? Where would the poet fly for his images of beauty, were he to be deprived of them? Are they not emblems of loveliness and innocence?—the very type of all things pleasing and graceful? We compare young lips to the rose, and the white brow to the pearly lily—the winning eye gathers its glow from the violet, and the sweet voice of the young maid is like a breeze perfumed by the breath of the flowers. We hang delicate blossoms on the silken ringlets of the young bride, and strew her path with the fragrant bells when she leaves the church.—We place them around the marble face of the dead in the narrow coffin; and a pretty custom prevails in South Wales, Monmouthshire, and some other districts, of decorating with choice flowers the graves of departed friends on Palm Sunday.

“We strew the flowers lightly on,
To deck their narrow beds,
But yet they little know what’s done
Above their heads.
There is in every flower
A language spoke and read,—

'Tis a pure and simple dower
To give the dead.

“ Every relative and friend
That deck the graves of those
They loved, and while the knee they bend
To place the boughs
Or trace the flowers one by one,
With greatest taste and care,
The heart breathes forth for those now gone
A silent prayer.

Oh ! yes, they are symbolical of our affections—pleasures remembered and hopes faded, wishes flown, and scenes cherished the more, because they can never return : and it bears with it a beautiful and sympathising feature, speaking a sincere and deep-felt remembrance of the departed, whether of a faithful partner, which cruel death has snatched from our embrace—an obedient and affectionate child—a loving brother or sister—a kind and indulgent parent,—or a friend to whom our hearts were long bound. In offering this tribute to their memory, in some instances no expense is spared in procuring the choicest flowers, and many are purchased considerably above their general value for the occasion.

“ And the flowers that we strew upon the grave,
Are wet with many a sorrowing tear.”

Oh ! the grave ! the grave ! it buries every error,
covers every defect, extinguishes every resent-

ment. From its peaceful bosom springs none but fond regrets and tender recollections. Who can look down upon the grave, even of an enemy, and not feel a compunctuous throb that he should ever have warred with the poor handful of earth that lies mouldering before him ! But the grave of those we loved—what a place for meditation ! There it is that we call up in long review the whole history of virtue and gentleness, and the thousand endearments lavished upon us almost unheeded in the daily course of intimacy ; there it is that we dwell upon the tenderness, the solemn, the awful sadness of the parting scene.—Still we look to the far-off spring in other valleys—to that eternal summer beyond the grave, where no rude blasts ever intrude, and where flowers once faded, bloom again in starry fields of ever bright radiance.

“ Flowers of the field, how meet ye seem
Man’s frailty to portray,
Blooming so fair ’neath morning’s beam,
Passing at eve away.
Teach this, and oh ! though brief your reign,
Sweet flowers, ye shall not live in vain.

“ Go form a monitory wreath
For youth’s unthinking brow ;
Go, and to busy manhood breathe
What most he fears to know—
Go shew the path where age doth tread,
And tell him of the silent dead.

‘ But whilst to thoughtless ones, and gay,
Ye breathe these truths severe,
To those who droop ’neath pale decay
Have ye no word of cheer ?
Yes, yes, ye weave a double spell,
And life and death betoken well.

“ Go then, where wrapt in fear and gloom,
Fond hearts and true are sighing ;
And deck with emblematic bloom
The pillow of the dying :
And softly speak, nor speak in vain,
Of your long sleep and broken chain.

“ And say, that He who from the dust
Recalls the slumbering flower,
Will surely visit those who trust
His mercy and his power ;
Will mark where sleeps their peaceful clay,
And roll, ere long, the stone away.”

How gratifying to behold the numerous beautiful images displayed by nature on a fine spring morning, when the whole scene is teeming with joy—the landscape glowing in beauty with the brightness of the rising sun—the foliage—the blades of grass, and the drooping boughs glistening with dew-drops—the playful rivulet now sparkling in the beams—now secreting itself in the covert ; the songs of the birds on the waving branches—the bleating of sheep upon the hills—the lowing of the cattle in the valley—and the living fragrance of flowers yet wet with crystal drops.

So many and so very pleasing are the associations connected with our early spring flowers, that even some which, but for these feelings, might be considered but homely specimens of nature's handiwork, stand high in our favour, and seem to possess something dearer than beauty to make us prize them so, that we may exclaim with Nicholl—

“ Beautiful children of the woods and fields !
That bloom by mountain's streamlet 'mid the hea-
ther,
Or into clusters 'neath the hazels gather—
Or where by hoary rocks you make your bields,
And sweetly flourish on through summer weather,—
I love ye all !

“ Beautiful flowers, to me ye fresher seem,
From the Almighty hand that fashioned all,
Than those that flourish by a garden wall ;
And I can image you as in a dream,—
Fair modest maidens, nurs'd in hamlets small,—
I love ye all !

“ Beautiful gems ! that on the brow of earth
Are fixed, as in a queenly diadem ;
Though lowly ye, and most without a name,
Young hearts rejoice to see your buds come forth,
As light erewhile into the world came—
I love ye all !

“ Beautiful things ye are, where'er ye grow !
The wild rose—the speedwell's peeping eyes—
Our own blue bell—the daisy that doth rise
Wherever sunbeams fall or winds do blow ;

And thousand more of blessed forms and dyes—
I love ye all!

“ Beautiful nurslings of the early dew,
Fanned, in your loveliness, by every breeze,
And shaded o’er by green and arching trees;
I often wish that I were one of you,
Dwelling afar upon the glassy leas—
I love ye all!

“ Beautiful watchers! day and night ye wake!
The evening star grows dim and fades away:
The morning comes and goes, and then the day
Within the arms of night its rest doth take;
But ye are wakeful wheresoe’er we stray—
I love ye all!

“ Beautiful objects of the wild bee’s love!
The wild bird joys your opening bloom to see,
And in your native woods and wilds to be;
All hearts, to nature true, ye strangely move,
Ye are so passing fair—so passing free—
I love ye all!

“ Beautiful children of the glen and dell—
The dingle deep—the moorland stretching wide,
And of the mossy mountain’s sedgy side!
Ye o’er my heart have thrown a lonesome spell,
And though the worldling, scorning may deride—
I love ye all!”

Through gardens, fields, forests, and even over
rugged mountains, we might wander on this fan-
ciful quest after remote ideas of pleasurable sensa-
tion connected with present beauty and enjoy-
ment; nor would our search be fruitless, so long

as the bosom of the earth afforded a receptacle for the germinating seed—so long as the gentle gales of summer continued to waft them from the parent stem, or so long as the welcome sun looked forth from the ever blooming garden of nature.

WINTER—SPRING.

“Hark ! ’twas dark Winter’s sullen voice
That told the glooms that reign’d ;
That bade the plains no more rejoice,
And all the waves be chain’d.”

“Forth walks from heav’n the beaming Spring,
Calm as the dew she sheds ;
And o’er the Winter’s mutt’ring king,
Her veil of roses spreads.”





SNOW DROP AND DAISY

JANUARY.



THE hours of sunshine have now just began to lengthen;—Nature is about to awaken from winter's "cheerless sleep:" and every thing calls upon us for a renewal of our best energies. To the young and happy even the bleak month of January has charms, and he who

"To Nature's voice attends, from month to month,
And day to day, through the revolving year;
Admiring, sees her in her every shape;
Feels all her sweet emotions at his heart;
Takes, what she liberal gives, nor thinks of more.
Marks the first bud, and sucks the healthful gale
Into his freshened soul; her genial hours
He full enjoys; and not a beauty blows,
And not an opening blossom breathes in vain."

There is a sort of fellowship with the youthful year,—to imbibe month by month a knowledge of the beauties which Nature is ever offering.

January was called by the Anglo-Saxons *Wolf-monath*.—Its name was derived from Janus, one

of the deities of the Romans, who was said to preside over the gates of Heaven,—and was selected by Numa Pompilius (when he added January and February to the months of his immediate predecessor Romulus), as a deity possessed of qualifications peculiarly adapted for presiding over the year, not only on account of the knowledge he was thought to possess of the past, but more especially for his presumed power of foresight. Towards the end of this month a few flowers begin to blossom, if the weather be mild, among the first the

SNOWDROP

lifts its head ; as the dove was sent forth from the ark to ascertain whether the waters were abated, so does the Snowdrop seem selected by Flora to find whether the frost be mitigated, and as a herald to announce the approach of spring. The botanical name of this plant is *Galanthus nivalis* ; it belongs to the Linnæan class hexandria, having six stamens, and order monogynia, one pistil.—In the natural order or system of Jussieu it is placed in the family Amaryllideæ ; and upon examination the *corolla*, or blossom, as it is usually termed, will be found to consist of six pieces ; the three outer ones spreading, and the three inner smaller, upright, margined, and springing from a sheath.

“ Winter’s gloomy night withdrawn,
Lo the young romantic hours,
Search the hills, the dale, the lawn,
To behold the Snowdrop white
Start to light,
And shine in Flora’s desert bowers
Beneath the vernal dawn,
The morning star of flowers.”

MONTGOMERY.

As the earliest blossom that expands, the Snowdrop claims our first regard; and countless are the lays in which the praises of this little modest flower are sung.

“ Like pendant flakes of vegetating snow,
The early herald of the infant year :
Ere yet the adventurous crocus dares to blow,
Beneath the orchard boughs thy buds appear.”

Lovely indeed is this flower in itself, and its English name signifies the intense whiteness that belongs to ‘it.—Lovely is it in its drooping blossom and unsullied purity.—Lovely, too, in its early appearance. This firstling of the year is like the feelings of youth, gentle and pure, and heedless of clouds and storms.

“ Mild offspring of a dark and sullen sire,
Whose modest form, so delicately fine,
Was nursed in whirling storms,
And cradled by the winds.”

This flower, so simply elegant, and so welcome as the earliest harbinger of brighter days, springs up as it were heedless of all obstacles; year after

year do its bright tufts appear to cheer us in our wintry desolation ; and

“ It dwells alone in its forest cave,
Where the moss lies round like an emerald wave,
And the wintry insects sleep and dwell,
Till awoke by the Snowdrop’s silvery bell.”

The French call it *Perce neige*, because it lifts its head above the snowy ground, while its leaves have their fleecy garments hanging upon them. Mrs. Barbauld has the following notice of it :—

“ Now the glad earth her frozen zone unbends,
And o’er her bosom breathe the western winds ;
Already now the Snowdrop dare appear,
The first pale blossom of the unripened year ;
As Flora’s breath by some transforming power
Had changed an icicle into a flower ;
Its name and hue the scentless plant retains,
And winter lingers in its icy veins.”

It is fond of the grassy banks of our rivers and moist meadows, and is found sometimes in woods. It is very plentiful in some parts of Monmouthshire, where several orchards, and many of the banks of the brooks and rivulets are thickly covered with this innocent little flower. Who does not feel pleasure in finding it wild, and who is not willing to say with the poet to his Maker—

“ Make thou my spirit pure and clear,
As are the frosty skies,
Or this first Snowdrop of the year,
That on my bosom lies.”

This "fair maid of February," as it is sometimes termed, in its formation is so admirable as to claim our particular attention. The delicacy with which the blossom is attached to the flower-stalk enables it to move with the winds in every direction, without fear of snapping, or suffering the air to defraud the stigma of the necessary part of its farina or pollen; while its modest pendant position is calculated to throw off all superfluous moisture, in order that the parts of fructification may be so secured as to replenish the earth with its seed. The pure white that is given to the petals of this flower contributes to the perfecting of the pollen, as it causes them to act as reflectors, and throw all the light and warmth on it, which at the chilling season of the year when the Snowdrop flowers is necessary.

"The Snowdrop, winter's timid child,
Awakes to life, bedew'd with tears,
And flings around its fragrance mild,
And where no rival flow'rets bloom,
Amidst the bare and chilling gloom
A beauteous gem appears!

"All weak and wan, with head inclined,
Its parent breast the drifted snow;
It trembles, while the ruthless wind
Bends its slim form, the tempest lowers,
Its emerald eye drops crystal showers
On its cold bed below.

"Poor flower! on thee no sunny beam,
No touch of genial warmth bestows,

Except to thaw the icy stream,
Whose little current purls along,
Until its progress grows more strong,
And whelms thee as it flows.

“The night breeze tears thy silky dress,
Which deck’d with silvery lustre shone;
The moon returns, not thee to bless—
The gaudy Crocus flaunts its pride,
And triumphs o’er its rival—died
Unsheltered and unknown.

“No sunny beam shall glad thy grave,
No bird of pity thee deplore;
There shall no verdant branches wave
For Spring shall all her gems unfold,
And revel midst her beds of gold,
And thou art seen no more.

“Where’er I find thee, gentle flower,
Thou still art sweet and dear to me!
For I have known the cheering hour,
Have seen the sunbeams cold and pale,
Have felt the chilling wintry gale,
And wept and shrunk like thee.”

This beautiful flower may be said to be the emblem of Consolation, and symbol of Hope. When the heart of man has been subdued by the gloom of winter, when the north wind whistles, and the hoar frost clothes the verdant despoiled trees—when the earth is covered with her carpet of snow, then are the pearly flowers of the Snow-drop a symbol of Hope—an emblem of Consolation—an assurance of coming spring.

“ I’ve oft admired the lonely flower
That mid the wintry snows,
When other flowrets bloom no more,
His silvery bosom shows.

“ I’ve thought it represented *Hope*,
Which with support replete,
Pours in the bitterest earthly cup,
A more than earthly sweet.

“ Yes, let affection force the tear—
The world our bosoms sting,
Hope, like the Snowdrop, still shall cheer,
And point to coming spring.”

What can be the reason that we are so fond of the little Snowdrop? is it for its whiteness or its delicacy? No, other flowers are as white, as delicate, and more beautiful. It is because it comes alone, when every thing around bears the aspect of gloom; then do we hail the little shoot of green, and its snowy flowers, which comes to smile upon us when we have no other flowers to admire. One poet, in addressing it, says

“ Though no warm and murmuring zephyr
Fan thy leaves with balmy wing,
Pleased we hail thee, spotless blossom,
Herald of the infant spring.”

And another writes thus :

“ A thousand bright flowers shall gladden the earth,
When summer comes forth in her beauty and mirth ;
Yet none more delightful imaginings bring
Than those which are first in our pathway to spring.

“Undaunted thou comest 'mid snow and 'mid sleet,
From earth's sheltering bosom, thy wintry retreat;
Thou comest, the herald of pleasures to be,
Of the scent of the rose-bud, the hum of the bee.

“Thou art not of those who delight in the rays,
The sunny resplendence of summer's glad days;
Nor to those who look up to the bright stars of June,
Yet fold up their beauty beneath the mild moon.

“Of such art not thou—no, an emblem more dear,
Of the friend that is kindest when sorrow is near;
The storms do not crush thee—the rain doth not blight,
And thou pointest like *Hope*, to a season more bright.”

The flowers of poetry have been lavished on this wintry favorite; and Shakspeare, Barbauld, Wordsworth, and many others, have sung in its praise.—We will give but one quotation more, before we turn our attention to another flower.

“Beneath the changeful skies of early spring,
Emblem of human life, and frail as fair,
Pale visitant of earth,
I mark thy modest bloom.

“Herald of brighter scenes and calmer joys,
When the sweet lark, enamoured of the dawn,
Above the cottage roof
Shall pour its melting ray.

“Though surly winter passing from the plain
Reluctant with his storms, while rude and wild
Stern desolation marks
His long and lonely tract:

“ Oft wraps thy beauty in a wreath of snow,
And gems with icicles that faintly shine
 Below with imaged beam,
 Thy cold but lonely brow.

“ I see thee smile like innocence at fate,
Beneath his idle rage and parting storms,
 Secure of happier hours,
 And skies without a cloud.

“ So piety, upheld by faith and *Hope*,
Endures serene the passing storms of life,
 With eye intent on Heaven,
 And thought already there.”

The contrast this flower presents of white and green (ever the most pleasing of contrasts to the human eye), may be one reason why mankind agree in their admiration of its simple beauties ; but a far more powerful reason is the delightful association by which it is connected with the idea of returning spring ; the conviction that the vegetable world through the tedious winter months has not been dead but sleeping, and that long nights, fearful storms and chilling blasts, have a limitation and a bound assigned them, and must in the appointed time give place to the fructifying and genial influence of spring. Perhaps we have murmured (for what is there in the ordinations of Providence at which man will not dare to murmur ?) at the dreariness of winter. Perhaps we have felt the rough blast too piercing to accord with our artificial habits.—Perhaps we have

thought long of the melting of the snow, that impeded our noonday walk. But it vanishes at last, and there beneath its white coverlid lies the delicate Snowdrop, so pure and pale, so true an emblem of hope, and trust, and confidence, that it might teach a lesson to the desponding, and show the useless and inactive how invaluable are the stirring of that energy, that can work out its purpose in secret and under oppression; and be ready in the fulness of time to make that purpose manifest and complete.

The Snowdrop teaches us another lesson—it marks the progress of time. We cannot behold it without feeling that another spring is at hand; and immediately our thoughts revert to the events which have occurred since last its fairy bells were expanded. We think of those who were then near and dear to us. It is possible they may never be near again; it is equally possible they may be dear no longer, Memory is busy with the past; until anticipation takes up the chain of thought, and we conjure up, and at last shape out in characters of hope, a long succession of chances and changes to fill up the revolving seasons which must come and go before that little flower shall burst forth in its loveliness again.

The *Holly* (*Ilex aquifolia*) is now thickly studded with berries; and the *Mistletoe* (*Viscum album*), and the *Ivy* (*Hedera helix*) will probably have some berries left; and a few golden blos-

soms may still linger on the dwarf *Furse* (*Ulex minor*), but these are rather the remnants of the past year. The *Common Groundsel* (*Senecio vulgaris*), and the *Purple Deadnettle* (*Lamium purpureum*) are generally in flower, and several of the mosses and lichens are in their greatest beauty.

One of the latter, which is generally found on old palings, the *Yellow Tremella*, is sometimes called St. Gudule's lamp, because its shining yellow jetty like substances glitter and quiver in the sun like the light of a feeble lamp. The *Common* or *Wall Screw Moss* (*Tortula muralis*) generally ripens its seed this month. This moss, which grows almost everywhere, on old walls, and what at other seasons looks like patches of dark green velvet, if now examined closely, will be found to have springing from its base numerous very slender stalks, each of which terminates in a dark brown case, which is in fact its fruit.—As the fruit ripens, a little cap, which covers it like an extinguisher, rises gradually, and is at last thrown off.

FEBRUARY.

“ How wonderful the laws assigned
To all the vegetable kind ;
By what mysterious power imprest
Does every plant that opes its breast
To gratulate the year’s sweet prime,
And glad with fruit the autumnal time,
To bloom and ripe its season know,
And by fix’d laws of being grow ?
Why, now that many a lingering flower
Awaits the later vernal hour,
Summer’s or Autumn’s warmer glow ;
Do these their charms maturer show
To Spring’s first wooing, nor forbear
The blasts and chilling frosts to dare ? ”

THE position which this month retains was given it by Numa Pompilius. It was placed under the protection of Neptune, and was highly esteemed by the Romans, who celebrated their *Juno Februata* on the day which is the vigil of Candlemas—and hence the name of February is undoubtedly derived.—Our Saxon ancestors termed the month *Sprout-kele*.

Although this may be thought by some to be a dreary month, yet even the frost and snow have a fairy beauty peculiarly their own—the pure white snow dances down to the earth, and minutely inspected, every particle is a crystal star, and the hoar frost on the green vegetables looks like crisp and corrugated emeralds, powdered with diamonds.

In this month the sap is mounting in the trees, and soon the buds, fed by the juicy nourishment, will burst into a verdant covering. In the floral dearth, however, if the weather be mild, a few flowers may be found expanding their blossoms to the few moments of sunshine that occasionally lighten up the dreariness of the wintry aspect; amongst the first we behold the

LESSER CELANDINE.

(*Ranunculus Ficaria.*)

Exhibiting its glossy leaves on warm hedge banks, and like glabrous stars of gold the blossoms unfold in great profusion.

“ ————— The first gilt thing
That wears the trembling pearls of spring.”

It belongs to the Polyandria class, and Polygynia order, and the extensive natural order Ranunculaceæ. This plant is very common, and is of the same bright colour as the Buttercup.—It has ge-

nerally eight petals formed like a star—its leaves are heart-shaped, and a number of small tubers lie around the root. This flower is the earliest of the *Ranunculus* tribe, and is also called the Pilewort Crowfoot.—Wordsworth thus speaks of it—

“Ere a leaf is on the bush,
In the time before the thrush
Has a thought about its nest,
Thou wilt come with half a call,
Spreading out thy glossy breast
Like a careless prodigal;
Telling tales about the sun,
When we’ve little warmth or none.”;

We have a number of other species of Crowfoot growing in our meadows and floating on our lakes; but they blossom later in the year. Amongst the number may be enumerated the Creeping Crowfoot, (*Ranunculus repens*), found plentifully in arable land, together with the Corn Crowfoot (*R. arvensis*); the Acrid or Meadow Crowfoot (*R. ácris*), very much resembling the Buttercup (*R. bulbosus*), but is more frequently seen, and has not a bulbous root or reflexed calyx (the little leaves beneath the blossom), by which it is principally distinguished. It is named from possessing the vesicatory principle in a high degree, and if cattle eat much of it, it blisters their mouths. The Celery-leaved Crowfoot (*R. scelerátus*), which is also very acrid, is said to be used by beggars to produce artificial sores.—All the

foregoing species have divided leaves; but the two following have spear-shaped ones: the Great Spearwort (*R. lingua*), and the Lesser Spearwort (*R. flammula*), and grow in marshes. The Water Crowfoot (*R. aquátilis*), is found with its white blossoms floating on our rivers and lakes; and the Ivy Crowfoot (*R. hederáceous*), has dimiutive blossoms, and its favorite haunt is moist ditches.—We shall speak more fully of the Buttercup and some other species, when we come to the month in which they bloom.

The next flower we observe is the

DANDELION,

(*Leóntodon Taráxacum*),

With its large yellow blossoms. Its name is derived from the Greek words for lion and tooth, from the tooth-like margin of the leaves. It belongs to the natural order Compositæ, or compound flowers, having a number of florets enclosed in a common calyx—each a tube with a strap-shaped corolla. It is arranged in the Linnean system in the class *Syngenesia equalis*, having all the florets perfect, that is, each with stamens and pistils. There are few of all the flowers that nature spreads wild and free over copse and moor, and crumbling wall, but what are looked upon with more favour than the Dandelion; yet exa-

mine well this gay and cheerful golden flower, and you will acknowledge that were it as scarce as it is plentiful—an exotic nursed in the conservatory, instead of a weed, flung over the uncultivated wastes of our native land, it would be as highly esteemed as it is now neglected and despised.

“*Leontodons unfold*

On the sweet turf their ray encircled gold, ♀
With Sol’s expanding beam the flowers unclose,
And rising Hesper lights them to repose.”

DARWIN.

This flower is as beautiful as many a cherished favorite, yet it associates with the lowly and despised; nurtured in poverty, it dispenses its favours freely to all who will receive them, and with a crown of glory, only despised because of its lavish distribution. It adorns the stately ruin and the humble cot—the friend of fallen greatness—the companion of the poor. The Dandelion is no dainty flower; the barren moor or stony waste land furnishes nourishment enough for all its wants: sometimes its golden blossoms display their richness on the thatch of the poor man’s humble cot, and many a gay tuft may be seen springing among the lichens and moss of some dilapidated castle or ruinous abbey, smiling unheeded amid all the desolation.—Hurdis, speaking of it, compares it to

“A college youth, that flashes for a day
All gold ; anon he doffs his gaudy suit,
Touch'd by the hand of some grave bishop,
And all at once, by commutation strange,
Becomes a reverend divine.”

Its emblem is the “rustic oracle :” wherever your footsteps turn, this oracle of the field may be consulted ; whether you ascend the mountain side, or tread the flowery vale, you will perceive patches of verdure covered with the golden flowers, or with light and transparent globes. The blossoms close at an early hour, for

“She enamoured of the sun,
At his departure hangs her head and weeps,
And shrouds her sweetness up, and keeps
Sad vigils, like a cloister'd nun,
Till his reviving ray appears,
Waking her beauty, as he dries her tears.”

MOORE.

Every where it offers to the hand that would gather, or the eye that would consult its flowers, which open and shut at certain hours of the day ; serving the solitary shepherd for a clock, while its feathery tufts are his barometer, predicting calm or storm.

“Thus in each flower and simple bell
That in our path untrodden lie,
Are sweet remembrancers, who tell
How fast their winged moments fly.”

At an early period of life the Dandelion attracts attention, shining gaudily among the youthful florist's variegated nosegay of bright wild flowers ; and when it has thrown off its gay petals, and its curious seed becomes a globe of down, then comes its hour of favour with the school-boy, as in sportive idleness he blows upon its clustered head, and scatters the seeds to the winds. Howitt speaks of it as

“ Dandelion, with globe of down,
The school-boy's clock in every town ;
Which the truant puffs amain,
To conjure lost hours back again.”

Pleasant it is to indulge the fancy in assimilating the bright offsprings of Flora, with the characters of those around us, and rendering the humblest weed the memorial of a friend. But how rarely will we discover one whose virtues we can compare to those exhibited by this despised flower—how few who will thus willingly choose their lot among those of whom Clare thus sweetly sings—the lowly and forgotten.—

“ Where rustic taste at leisure trimly weaves
The rose and straggling woodbine to the eaves,
And on the crowded spot that pales enclose
The white and scarlet daisy rears in rows,
Training the trailing peas in clusters neat,
Perfuming evening with a luscious sweet,—
And sunflowers planting for their gilded show,
That scale the window's lattice ere they blow,
And sweet to cottagers within the sheds,
Peep through the crystal panes their golden heads.”

THE PURPLE SPRING CROCUS,

(Crocus vernus),

Triandria, monogynia—N. O. Irideæ,

Is naturalised about Nottingham, but like the other species, cannot be considered an indigenous plant. The Saffron Crocus (*C. sativus*) grows in meadows about Essex, where it is cultivated for its fragrant stigmas, which constitute saffron. The Golden Crocus (*C. aureus*), and several other species, are sometimes found wild, but are generally considered to be the outcasts of gardens. The golden crocus is a flower we generally look upon as the herald of Spring, and is the emblem of youthful gladness.

“Welcome, wild harbinger of Spring!

To this small nook of earth;

Feeling and fancy fondly cling

Round thoughts which owe their birth

To thee, and to the humble spot

Where chance has fixed thy lowly lot.

“To thee, for thy rich golden bloom,

Like Heaven’s fair bow on high;

Portends, amid surrounding gloom

That brighter hours are nigh,

When blossoms of more varied dyes,

Shall ope their tints to warmer skies.”

BARTON.

Soon after the Sowdrop it rises its head above the bare earth, and unfolds its golden cup.

“Lowly, sprightly, little flower!

Herald of a brighter bloom,

Bursting in a sunny hour

From thy wintry tomb.

“Hues you bring, bright, gay and tender,

As if never to decay ;

Fleeting in their varied splendour,

Soon, alas ! it fades away.”

PATTERSON.

The leaves are all radical and grass-like—the root a corni,—and the flowers large in comparison to the plant.

THE MEZEREON

(*Daphne Mezereum*).

Octandria, monogynia—Nat. Ord. Thymeleæ.

This pretty shrub is well known, more from its finding a place so often in the cottager's garden and in the parterre, than from observing it wild in the woods, its native haunts in the southern and midland counties. In some districts it seems to be such an especial favorite with the peasantry, that it is almost the only flower they cultivate in their little garden plots, with the exception of the honeysuckle, the polyanthus and

the double daisy. One reason of its being so prevalent is on account of its early blossoming, for it blooms even whilst the snow is on the ground, and

“All love to see
Thy simple bloom, Mezereon tree;
The thrush his sweetest minstrelsy
Is pouring forth to welcome thee;
Thy store of sweets the early bee
Hath sought with ready industry,
And prizing much thy beauty, we
Are come to greet thee joyously.

“Long shalt thou hold thy gentle sway,
For when thy wreaths must fade away
Beneath the summer’s scorching ray,
Thy stems shall glow in vesture gay,
With scarlet berries,—rich array.”

BOUQUET DES SOUVENIRS.

The whole shrub is erect, forming a compact bush, and bearing a profusion of rose-coloured blossoms, growing in clusters of three all over the stems, and appearing before the leaves. The flowers have hairy tubes, and are succeeded by red berries, which form a pretty contrast with the light green foliage with which the shrub is then clad. Cowper alludes to it in blossom thus :

“Mezereon too,
Though leafless, well attired, and thick beset
With blushing wreaths, investing every spray.”

Another reason it is so prized as a garden flower, arises from the delicious fragrance it exhales.

“Odours of spring, my sense ye charm
 With fragrance premature,
 And mid these days of dark alarm,
 Almost to hope allure.
 Methinks with purpose soft ye come
 To tell of brighter hours,
 Of May’s blue skies’ abundant bloom,
 Her sunny gales and showers.”

MRS. TIGHE.

The blossoms are sometimes white.—It takes its name in allusion to the beautiful nymph Daphne, the daughter of the river Peneus, who is represented in the mythology to have been changed into a laurel whilst being pursued by Apollo, who became enamoured of her.

Another species, the Wood or Spurge Laurel, *Dáphne Lauréola*, is frequently found in woods, growing from one to three feet high, with very few branches; the leaves are nearly all terminal, and therefore bearing some resemblance to the Palm: the flowers are drooping, yellowish green, and funnel-shaped, having a four-cleft limb, and are succeeded by bluish black berries. The leaves are glossy—spear-shaped, and the shrub is ever-green.

List of Flowers to be met with occasionally during the month:—Red Dead Nettle (*Lamium perpureum*); Common Groundsel (*Senecio vulgaris*); Strawberry-leaved Cinquefoil (*Polentilla Fragariastrum*); and Common Ground Ivy (*Glechoma hederaceus*.)

SPRING.



“Fresh Spring, the herald of Love’s mighty king,
In whose coat armour richly are displayed
All sorts of flowers the which on earth do spring
In goodly colours gloriously arrayed.”

THE winter is gone and over, the snow and sleet have faded from the hills, the hoar frost has dropped from the trees, and at the smile of Spring the vallies become green. Darwin, whose poetical reputation was as bright as the plants and flowers which formed the subject of his verse, in his invocation to the goddess of Botany, writes:—

“Winds of the north! restrain your icy gales,
Nor chill the bosom of these happy vales!
Hence in dark heaps, ye gathering clouds, revolve!
Disperse, ye lightnings, and ye mists dissolve!
Hither emerging from yon orient skies,
Botanic goddess, bend thy radiant eyes;
O’er these soft scenes assume thy gentle reign,
Pomona, Ceres, Flora in thy train.
O’er the still dawn thy placid smile effuse,
And with thy silver sandals print the dews.
In noon’s bright blaze thy vermeil vest unfold,
And wave thy emerald banner starred with gold.

“She comes ! the Goddess, through the whispering
air,

Bright as the morn descends her blushing car ;
Each circling wheel a wreath of flowers entwines,
And gemmed with flowers, the silken harness shines ;
The golden bits with flowery studs are deck'd,
And knots of flowers the crimson reins connect.
And now on earth the silver axle rings,
And the shell sinks upon its slender springs.
Light from her airy seat the Goddess bounds,
And steps celestial press the panted grounds :
Fair Spring advancing, calls her feather'd quire
And tunes to softer notes her laughing lyre !
Bids the gay hours on purple pinions move,
And arms her zephyrs with the shafts of love.”

Winter swept away the leaves which autumn
had seared, and now the young buds are bursting
from their folds to spread a new mantle from the
boughs. The season again invites us to go forth,
to inhale the flower-perfumed zephyr of health,
with “healing on its wings.”—All nature is again
rejoicing, and

“Now spring the living herbs profusely wild
O'er all the deep green earth, beyond the power
Of botanist, to number up their tribes,
Whether he steal along the lonely vale
In silent search, or through the forest, rank
With what the dull incurious weeds account
Burst his blind way ; or climbs the mountain rock,
Fir'd by the nodding verdure of its brow,
With such a liberal hand has nature flung
Their seeds abroad, blown them about in winds
Innumerable, mixed them with the nursing mould,
The moisten'd current and prolific rain.”

Nature now infuses her cheerfulness and smiles into the hearts of her children, and as the spring among the blossoms, so are the young among the people ; we shall therefore say a few words on the budding season, and welcome it with the following invocation :

“ Aerial Flora ! sister of the spring,
Arise, and let thy blooming form be seen,
Haste, play thy youthful fancies on the green,
And from thy hand ambrosial odours fling,
Invite the sylvan choir to wake and sing,
While the sun sleeps in gold upon the scene ;
To dress the groves thy clustering Harebells bring !
And chase hoar winter with thy sprightly mien.
Then shall sweet zephyrs and prolific showers
Succeed to parching winds and piercing rain,
With their soft balm reanimate the flowers,
And strew gay cowslips o’er the golden plain :
Then frost, no more shall waste the roseate bowers,
But Flora crown’d with sweets her sway unhurt maintain.”

There is something particularly pleasant and exhilarating in the freshness of the soil—in the mossy bank—the balmy air—the voices of birds—the early and delicious flowers that we have seen and felt only in childhood and in spring.

“ Come, gentle spring, ethereal mildness, come,
And from the bosom of yon dropping cloud,
While music wakes around, veiled in a shower
Of shadowing roses ; on our plains descend.”

The songs of the birds were hushed by the wintry

blast, but now a thousand throats throw out their musical cadences to welcome the return of Spring.

“ And see where surly winter passes off
Far to the north, and calls his ruffian blasts ;
His blasts obey, and quit the howling hill,
The scattered forests, and the raging vale,
While softer gales succeed, at whose kind touch
Dissolving snows in livid torrents lost,
And mountains lift their green heads to the skies.”

The young grass shoots its tender blades, and affords delicious food for the new-born lambs, the clear rivulet again flows for their refreshment.

“ O lovely Spring—when I behold
The light thy gentle eyes unfold,
First waking from thy sleep,
With all the treasures thou dost bear,
While from thy folds of braided hair
The infant flow’rets peep.

“ When from the hill, the glen, the lawn,
Chill winter’s icy veil withdrawn—
Uprise in myriads gay,
Fresh buds of every scent and bloom,
While birds their choral strains resume—
To hail the new-born day.

“ Then with what joy at morn I rise,
To view the blush of early skies
Light up the mingled scene ;
The city spire—and lofty dome,
The vast domain—the cottage home,
But most the woodland green.

“Where thou, young spring! dost lend thy fair
—Thy opening blossoms, ’till the air
Of genial summer glow,
When sunbeams o’er the embryo fruit
Shall bid each germ luxuriant shoot,
And richer gifts bestow.

“Without thee—Nature—pale,—bedew’d
With sorrow’s tears—in silence strew’d
Her wither’d leaves around—
Memorials of sweet vanished hours,
When, cheer’d with smiles and crown’d with flow’rs,
She stray’d o’er fairy ground.

“Thus is the cheerless spirit, dark—
And o’er its clouds no gladd’ning spark
Of hope, can joy relume,
When from some garland bright with dews,
Death plucks a cherish’d flower, and strews
Its leaflets on the tomb.

“Death—that tears not the withering bough,
Whose joyous tints had ceas’d to glow
But chills with icy spell
The bud whose gay perennial smile,
Could the deluded heart beguile,
To trust—to love—too well!

“Weep not the blighted flow’ret’s bloom;
Though fled the light—the sweet perfume
That cheer’d life’s twilight even,—
A brighter spring new grace bestows,
And paints it with each ray that glows
In Eden’s sun-bright heaven.

“See spring unwreaths fair nature’s breast!—
Then—mourner—on thy gloomy vest

Wear hope's young roses bright :—
From wintry scenes, on earth's dark plains
Turn thee—where spring immortal reigns
In fadeless fields of light.

“Fair spring, thou art the pledge of love,
Thou com'st from realms of bliss above,
From heaven's benignant power,
Who decks with flowers the waving woods—
Gives song to rills and falling floods,
And gilds life's fleeting hour.”

The flower blossoms and fades—the tree groweth up and is cut down—the beasts of the hills are consumed and heard of no more—creation itself must decay—man alone is immortal. Then improve the Spring of Life ! the bud of youth hath within it the germ of eternity ! the winter of age may sear its leaf, and its stem may be buried in the dust, but is intended for a better soil, and for a climate where winter will never intrude.

Thomson has so beautifully described the arrival of Spring that we cannot refrain from quoting it :—

“The penetrative sun
His face deep-darting to the dark retreat
Of vegetation, sets the streaming power
At large, to wander o'er the verdant earth
In various hues, but chiefly thee gay green !
Thou smiling nature's universal robe !
United light and shade ! where the sight dwells
With growing strength, and ever new delight.
From the moist meadow to the withered hill

Led by the breeze the vivid verdure runs,
And swells and deepens to the cherish'd eye.
The hawthorn whitens, and the juicy groves
Put forth their buds, unfolding by degrees,
Till the whole forest stands display'd,
In full luxuriance to the sighing gales."

Every person possessing an admiration for rural and sylvan scenery cannot fail to entertain a strong affection for the poet who has portrayed their charms with so much correctness and enthusiasm, —throughout his poetry we recognize the same features of blandness and benevolence—of beauty of form and colour, which we recognise as distinguishing traits of the natural landscape, and are conveyed by his artless mind as faithfully as the lights and shades on the face of creation. His vivid description of a garden in Spring is thus given :

"At length the finished garden to the view,
Its vistas opens, and its alleys green,
Snatch'd through the verdant maze the hurried eye
Distracted wanders ; now the bow'ry walk
Of covert close, where scarce a speck of day
Falls on the lengthened gloom, protracted sweeps,
Now meets the bending sky ; the river now
Dimpling along, the breezy ruffled lake,
The forest darkening round, the glittering spire,
The ethereal mountain, and the distant main ;
But why so far extensive ? when at hand,
Along the blushing borders bright with dew,
And in yon mingled wilderness of flowers
Fair handed spring unbosoms every grace,
Throws out the snowdrop and the crocus first ;

The primrose, daisy, violet darkly blue,
And polyanthus of unnumbered dyes ;
The yellow wallflower stain'd with iron brown,
And lavish stocks that scent the garden round,
From the soft wing of vernal bosoms shed
Anemonies, auriculas, enriched
With shining meal o'er all their verdant leaves,
And full ranunculus of glowing red,
Then comes the tulip race, where beauty plays
Her idle freaks ; from family diffused
To family, as flies the father dust,
The varied colours run, and while they break
On the charm'd eye, the exulting florist marks
With secret pride, the wonders of his hand.
No gradual bloom is wanting ; from the bud
First-born of spring, to summer's musky tribes,
Nor hyacinths of purest virgin white,
Low-bent and blushing inward, nor jonquils
Of potent fragrance ; nor Narcissus fair,
As o'er the fabled fountain hanging still ;
Nor broad carnations, nor gay spotted pinks ;
Nor shower'd from every bush the damask rose,
Infinite numbers, delicacies, smells,
With hues on hues, expression cannot paint
The breath of nature with her endless bloom.

MARCH.



“STURDY March, with brows full sternly bent,
And armed strongly rode upon a ram,
The same which over Hellespontus swam;
Yet in his hand a spade he also hent,*
And in a bag all sorts of seeds ysame,†
Which on the earth he strewed as he went,
And fill’d her womb with fruitful hope and nourish-
ment.”

SUCH is Spenser’s portrait of this month. What a delightful sensation to see the inanimate parts of the creation—the meadows, flowers, trees, and fields beginning to put on their cheerful verdure.

“The snowdrop, and then the violet
Arose from the ground with warm rain wet,
And their breath was mixed with fresh odours sent
From the turf, like the voice and the instrument.

“Then the pied wind flowers and the tulip’s toll,
And, narcissi, the fairest among them all,
Who gaze on their eyes in the stream’s recess,
Till they die of their own dear loveliness.

* Seized.

† Collected together.

March was the first month of the ancient year; Romulus so placed it in his kalendar. The Romans named it after Mars, the god of war, in honour of their first monarch, the reputed son of that deity; and also as some suppose from the fierce and blustering winds generally prevalent at its commencement. By the Saxons March was called *Hyld-monath*, or the stormy month.

If we ramble into woods, or along a shady lane we discover large patches of the Dog's Mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*). The flower is green and insignificant, the plant grows about a foot high, with the leaves which are egg-shaped and cut at the edges, growing mostly on the upper part of the stem, the flowers are in spikes growing from the axil of the leaves. In drying the plant turns of a black green. It belongs to the class of Diœcia and order enneandria—that is, having the stamens numbering from nine to twelve in flowers on one plant, and the pistils only in a different plant; the fertile flowers are succeeded by two berries. There is nothing about the appearance of this plant to draw our particular attention—it is not often noticed, and if it be observed not often plucked. There is another species, the Annual Mercury (*M. annua*), possessing no more beauty than the first, but is not so often found, being confined to particular localities. These flowers belong to the natural order—Euphorbiacœ, a family of acrid and often milky plants, yielding food and poison,

medicine and dye. It derives its name from the god Mercury, who is said to have discovered its virtues. About the poisonous nature of this plant authors in ancient times differed: Gerard thought it free from noxious properties, and to be eatable; whilst Ray, in his Synopsis of the British plants, gives an account of it as a poison; which is right we do not pretend to say, but there is nothing palatable in the taste to cause it to be eaten, and its medicinal properties are doubtful.

RED DEAD NETTLE.

(*Laminum purpureum.*)

Class—Didynamia. Order—Gymnospermia.

Is now flowering in waste and cultivated ground, growing about eight inches high, the leaves are covered with a silky hairiness, especially the upper ones, which have a purplish tinge; they are round heart-shaped, with waved edges: the calyx is campanulate, ten-ribbed and five-toothed; and the throat of the corolla is inflated, the upper lip is entire, the lower one two-lobed. This plant is not a favorite; and perhaps not generally known, having nothing in its appearance to attract attention, the whole plant being of a dingy colour.

“A little herb of dark red hue,
I met with in my walk,

On sunny bank it verdant grew,
In yonder hazel balk.

“ Not earliest of the spring it blows,
Yet earlier few appear ;
Scarce melted have rough winter's snows,
When it adorns the year.

“ I think that neither ass nor sheep
Will crop it as it feeds,
And men will never care to reap,
But class it among weeds.

“ It is a weed—then why not throw
The useless thing away,
And in its place let others grow,
More sweet, more fair, and gay.

“ No let it be ; despise it not,
For with its homely smiles,
It brightens else a barren spot—
Perchance a care beguiles.”

The White Dead Nettle, (*S. Album*,) also about this time blooms on hedge banks, and is a much larger plant than the last. The class to which the dead nettles belong is distinguished by having two long and two short stamens in each blossom ; and the order is known by having four seeds at the bottom of the calyx not enclosed in a capsule. They belong with the mint, thyme, marjoram, wood sage, bugle, &c., to the extensive natural order *Labiatae*, many of which are employed medicinally, and abounding in essential oil, cam-

phor and bitter extractive. They have square stems and opposite leaves : the dead nettle derives its name, according to some authors, from the Greek for *throat*, on account of the shape of its blossoms, whilst others state it to be from *Lama*, a celebrated marine monster.

THE COMMON DAFFODIL.

(*Narcissus Pseudo Narcissus*.)

Hexandria, monogynia, N. O. Amaryllideæ.

This plant now puts forth its flaunting yellow blossoms. It belongs to the same family as the Snowdrop, and the corolla has six divisions, and a cup-shaped crown, within which are six stamens and one style. The single flower arises from a sheath, and the leaves are long, narrow, and channelled. The blossoms of this plant is much sought after in some parts for the purpose of forming wreaths and devices for decorating the graves of the departed on Palm Sunday.

“Their blossom’d fragrance there to shed
In sunshine and in showers.”

This pretty custom is kept up in Monmouthshire, Glamorganshire, and some other counties in England and Wales, and annually the graves of lost friends are strewn with the choicest flowers in blossom.

“It is—that we would thence create
 Bright memory of the past,
 And give their imaged form a date
 Eternally to last.

It is—to hallow, whilst regret
 Is busy with their actions yet,
 The sweetnesses they cast,
 To sanctify upon the earth
 The glory of departed worth.”

The wealthy purchase and cultivate exotics at considerable expense for this purpose: but the poor are obliged to have recourse to the polyanthus, laurel, and our most showy wild flowers for bedecking their little mounds. On passing through a churchyard on the day called Flowering Sunday, it recalls many recollections; there is evidence that the dead are not forgotten, although years may have elapsed since they were snatched from us; and that strong feelings of affection remain. The following lines were composed in connection with this interesting custom:—

“The sun shone brightly o’er the graves
 That scattered lay around the place,
 And now and then an April shower
 Left on the wavy mounds a trace;
 When forth my little boy and I
 Together went; his dawning powers
 Of mind, inquiring how and why,
 The graves were all bestrew’d with flowers.

“I told him that a mother’s love
 Flowers on her buried darling laid,

Because her heart still yearned for him
Who mouldered with the early dead :
And that a sister fondly here,
A brother, with affection, there
Around these graves, mementos threw
Of their undying love and care.

“ ‘ Well Father,’ said my little boy,
‘ Would you or mother wish to see
The pretty flowers that come so soon,
Lie on a little grave o’er me ?’
‘ Why no, my boy,’ to him I said ;
‘ We would not wish that you should die,
Though young and pure your infant heart,
And, dying, going to heaven on high.’

“ ‘ But what is death ? and why should all
Die, and be put into the ground ?’
My little boy inquired—and then
Look’d to my face, with thought profound ;
Thus questioned by a simple child,
The father, man, had no reply ;
The child’s awakening mind soar’d far
Beyond the man’s world-clouded eye.

“ And as we went adown the hill,
He whisper’d, ‘ Father,’ with a sigh,
‘ I wish you’d tell me, if you please,
Why men and children all must die ?’
Ah ! why indeed ? why should the babe,
With dimpled chin, and rosy face,
The youth, just fresh from boyhood’s dreams,
With eye of pride, and step of grace—
Why should the man, whose ken takes in
Life’s beauty—its unclouded sky—
Ah ! why should these, and why should all
Just breathe, look round, live, love, and die ?

“ Brief question ! yet how much involved
Within its import, deep and wide !
Why have so many lived at all ?
Why have so many early died ?
Philosopher, sage, poet, seer,
A child, inquires for your reply :—
‘ Why should the young and beauteous bloom,
And blooming, wither, fade, and die.’ ”

J. H. S.

We always find abundance of Daffodils scattered on the graves amongst the few other flowers in bloom at this season. It grows wild in some parts of England and Ireland, but in most counties it is only seen in gardens. Along the banks of rivulets, and in some of the moist meadows and woods in Monmouthshire and Westmoreland we may see thousands waving in the breeze, and reminding us of the following pretty lines of Wordsworth on this showy flower :

“ I wandered lonely, as a cloud
That floats on high, o’er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

“ Continuous as the stars that shine,
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretch’d in never ending line,
Along the margin of the bay.
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

“The waves beside them danced, but they
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee;
A poet could not but be gay
In such a joyful company.
I gazed, and gazed—but little thought
What wealth to me the show had brought.

“For oft when on my couch I lie,
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude,
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.”

The name of this flower is derived from the metamorphosis of the youth Narcissus, fabled to have been changed, after slighting the love of the nymph Echo, into this plant, an inhabitant sometimes of watery places. In the Language of Flowers it is the emblem of self-love. Who can behold the Daffodil standing by the silent brook, its stately form reflected in the glassy mirror, without losing themselves in that most fanciful of all poetical conceptions, in which the graceful youth is described as viewing his own beauty until he becomes lost in admiration and finally enamoured of himself, while hopeless Echo sighs away into a sound for the love of that beautiful youth, that was neither to be purchased by her caresses nor won by her despair. The poet Gay thus describes the change:

“Here young Narcissus o’er the fountain stood,
And viewed his image in the crystal flood;

The crystal flood reflects his lovely charms,
And the pleased image strives to meet his arms,
No nymph his inexperienced breast subdued,
Echo in vain the flying boy pursued,
Himself alone the foolish youth admires,
And with fond look her smiling shade desires ;
O'er the smooth lake with fruitless tears he grieves,
His spreading fingers shoot in verdant leaves ;
Through his pale veins, green sap now gently flows,
And in a short-lived flower his beauty blows,
Let vain Narcissus warn each female breast
That beauty's but a transient good at best ;
Like flowers it withers with the advancing year,
And age, like winter, robs the blooming fair."

There are two other species of this flower indigenous, the pale Narcissus, *N. Biflorus*, having two blossoms springing from the sheath, and growing in Kent, Devon, and about some parts of Ireland ; and the Narcissus of the Poets, *N. Poeticus*, bearing a single blossom on each stalk, larger than the last, and having a red border to the nectary. It is found in sandy soil about Norfolk, Kent, and Uske, in Monmouthshire. The blossom is very delicate and pretty, and the plant is frequently a favorite garden flower. It yields a delicious odour, but the scent is generally considered unwholesome and soporific, and if the perfume is repeatedly inhaled in a close room, has a similar effect in a slighter degree to a small dose of laudanum, after the excitement is gone off. The plant arises from an egg-shaped bulb ; its growth is rapid and duration short. The poet Herrick has apostrophised it thus :

“ We have short time to stay as you,
We have as short a spring ;
As quick a growth to meet decay
As you or any thing ;
We die,
As your hours do, and dry
Away,
Like to the summer rain,
Or as the pearls of morning dew,
Ne’er to be found again.

“ Fair daffodils, to see
You haste away so soon,
Ere yet the early rising sun
Has yet attained its noon
Stay, stay
Until the opening day
Has run,
And having played together we
Will go with you along.”

THE GREEN HELLEBORE.

(*Helleborus viridis.*)

Class—Polyandria. Order—Polygynia, N. O. Ranunculaceæ.

Derives its name from the Greek words *helem* and *bora*, to injure and food, from the poisonous nature of the plant. It grows in thickets and hedges in Scotland and in Monmouthshire, and other counties in England ; the leaves are dark green, and fingered ; and the blossoms a green-

ish yellow. Another species, with flowers tipped with purple and evergreen leaves, and of fetid and cathartic properties, called Stinking Hellebore, or Bearsfoot, (*H. fœtidus*) grows in some parts of England in chalky districts. It is often given to children to destroy worms, but it is a powerful medicine, and if taken in too large a quantity may prove fatal.

THE COMMON BARBERRY.

(*Berberis vulgaris*.)

Class—hexandria. Order—monogynia,—N. O. Berberideæ.

Is a shrub growing in some parts of England and Ireland; the thorns on it are three-forked, and the flowers in a raceme like the currant-blossom, and are succeeded by bright red oblong berries, tipped with black. The flowers have a disagreeable scent, and the stamens an elastic property when touched, and throw the pollen upon the stigma: the berries are very acid, but when boiled with sugar form an agreeable preserve. Its name is derived from Berberys, the Arabic for this fruit.

THE PRIMROSE.

(Primula vulgaris.)

Class—Pentandria. Order—Monogynia. Nat. Ord.—
Primulacææ.

Is named from *Primus*, (first) on account of its early appearance. The Primrose is emblematical of early youth, and well may it be so ; so bright, so delicate, it may be nipped in the very bloom of beauty. Shakspeare says,

“ Pale Primroses
That die unmarried, ere they can behold
Bright Phœbus in his strength ;”

and in another place he makes it a funeral flower for youth :

“ With modest flowers,
While summer lasts, and I live here, Fidele,
I’ll sweeten thy sad grave ; thou shalt not lack
The flower that’s like thy face, pale Primrose.”

CYMBELINE.

Indeed it is invested by all poets with a mournful character, and Mrs. Hunter has designated it a melancholy blossom, as will be seen by the following lines :—

"The sun declines, his parting ray
Shall bear the cheerful light away
And on the landscape close ;
Then I will seek the lonely vale,
Where sober evening's primrose pale,
To greet the night-star blows.

" Soft, melancholy bloom, to thee
I turn with conscious sympathy,
Like thee my hour is come,
When lengthening shadows slowly fade,
Till lost in universal shade,
They sink beneath the tomb.

" By thee I'll sit and inly muse
What are the charms in life we lose
When time demands our breath ?
Alas ! the load of lengthen'd age
Has little can our wish engage
Or point the shaft of death.

" No, 'tis alone the pang to part
With those we love, that rends the heart ;
That agony to save,
Some nameless cause in nature strives,
Like thee, in shades our hope revives,
And blossoms in the grave."

Many other poets have written in a similar strain,
and amongst them Herrick gives the following
pensive and delightful stanzas :—

"Ask me why I send you here
This sweet infant of the year ?
Ask me why I send to you
This primrose all bepearl'd with dew ?

I will whisper in your ears,
 The sweets of love are wash'd with tears
 Ask me why this flower doth show,
 So yellow, green and sickly too?
 Ask me why the stalk is weak,
 And bending yet it doth not break?
 I will answer they discover
 What fainting hopes are in a lover."

The Primrose is so well known that it needs not description. It differs from the Cowslip, another species of *Primula*, in seeming to have each peduncle or flower-stalk separated, but if the scape (flower-stalk) be traced to the bottom, it will be found to spring from one common point, and to constitute a sessile umbel. Its favorite place of growth is the wood or moist hedge banks.

"The Primrose, tenant of the glade,
 Emblem of virtue in the shade,"

recalls the days of childhood more touchingly perhaps than any other flower, with the exception of the Daisy, for who does not remember the time when he

"Robbed every primrose root he met,
 And oftentimes took the root to set;
 And joyful home each root he bore,
 And felt as he will feel no more."

Many as are the varieties of this flower; perhaps there is none so dear to us as the common sulphur-coloured one, our native flower, it being associated.

with the recollections of our Spring rambles, and the sunshiny days of our youth, when we went frolicking about from dingle to dell, and from place to place, full of careless innocence, when

“It was a thing of wild delight
To find thee on the bank,
Where all the day thy open leaves
The golden sunlight drank,—
To see thee in the sister group
That clustering grew together,
And seem'd too delicate for aught
Save summer's brightest weather.

“I know not what it was that made
My heart to love thee so;
For though all gentle things to me
Were dear, long—long ago,
There was no bird upon the bough,
No wild flower on the lea,
No twinkling star, no running brook
I lov'd so much as thee.’

On a March morning, when the sun at intervals shoots out his rays upon the sod so lately covered with snow, and the biting wind whistles shrilly around us, and the sleet is driven against the trees with violence—it looks in the sunshine like a type of gladness—in the storm an image of consolation.

“Beneath the sylvan canopy, the ground
Glitters with flowery dyes, the primrose first
In mossy dell, return of Spring to greet.”

GISBORNE.

The following verses were written on seeing a Primrose blossoming early in the year, when the weather was bleak and chill :

“ O fair young flower ! thou art springing forth,
To the chilly breath of the angry north,
And thy blossoms open their gentle eye
Beneath the scowl of a wintry sky.

“ And leafless bowers o’er thy tender form,
Protect thee not from the passing storm ;
And the bee comes not forth from its wintry cell
To quaff the dew from thy golden bell.

“ Too soon—too soon thou hast opened up
The nectar stores of thy treasure cup ;
There are none to welcome thy early bloom,
Or breathe the breath of thy rich perfume.

“ The hoar frost lies on the ground like gems,
And birds are mute on the naked stems,
And thy pale and starlight blossoms gleam
On the cheerless banks of a frozen stream.

“ But soon a change on earth shall be,
And leaf and blossom shall clothe the tree,
And the wild bird merrily blend his song
With the streamlet’s voice as it floats along.

“ And thou art sent with thy sunny smile,
To cheer this desolate scene awhile !
And waft our visions and thoughts away
To the glorious light of a summer day.”

The poet Clare hails the presence of this early ornament of spring as follows :—

“ Welcome, pale Primrose ! starting up between
Dead matted leaves of ash and oak, that strew
The every lawn, the wood, and shining through
Mid creeping moss and ivy’s darker green.

“ How much thy presence beautifies the ground,
How sweet thy modest unaffected pride
Glowes on the sunny bank’s and wood’s warm side,
And where the fairy flowers in groups are found.

“ The schoolboy roams enchantedly along,
Plucking the fairest with a rude delight ;
While the meek shepherd stops his simple song,
To gaze a moment on the pleasing sight,
O’erjoy’d to see the flowers that truly bring
The welcome news of sweet returning spring.”

If we might presume to differ from the high authority by which this flower has been fixed upon as the emblem of early youth, we would rather from its retiring beauty and love of dingle and dell, have it made to represent *humility*, for, as Balfour terms it,—

“ The Primrose pale,
Is nature’s meek and modest flower.”

Kirke White writes thus of the early Primrose :—

“ Thee, when young spring first questioned winter’s
sway,
And dared the sturdy blusterer to the fight,
Thee on the bank he threw,
To mark his victory.

“ In this low vale, the promise of the year,
Serene, thou open'st to the nipping gale,
Unnoticed and alone
Thy tender elegance.

“ So virtue blooms, brought forth amid the storms
Of chill adversity, in some lone walk
Of life she rears her head
Obscure and unobserved.

“ While every bleaching breeze that on her blows,
Chastens her spotless purity of breast,
And hardens her to bear
Serene, the ills of life.”

The Primrose is a flower upon which we dwell with pleasure proportioned to our taste for rural scenery, and the estimate we have previously formed of the advantages of a peaceful and secluded life.—Connected with this flower imagination pictures a cottage with a thatched roof, standing on the side of a hill, and a little woody brake whose green banks are spangled all over with yellow stars, with a troop of rosy-cheeked children gambolling on the same bank, gathering the blossoms as we used to gather them, and presenting to the mind the combined ideas of natural enjoyment, innocence and rural peace.

“ Well do I love to look on thee, thou sweet and simple
flower,
Thy beauty oft hath cheer'd my heart in sorrow's pen-
sive hour,

But now with moisten'd eye I mark thy glowing tints
decay,
And sigh to think that aught I love so soon should
die away.

'Thou wert an early favourite in boyhood's happy
days,
I used to haunt the spot where thou thy modest head
did raise;
And watch with passionate delight thy small leaves
brightly bloom,
Which breathed in every passing breeze thy delicate
perfume.

"In manhood's ripening years, sweet flower, thou art
beloved still,
And fondly sought for as of yore, by rivulet and
rill,
And often in my wanderings, by mead and flowery
lea,
Array'd in glittering dew-drops bright thy well known
form I see.

"Oh beautiful exceedingly, is thy last lingering look,
Which seems to bid a sad farewell to valley, hill, and
brook;
And did not shades of doubt and fear upon my spirit
lie,
Like thee, lone flower, I'd tranquilly breathe out my
latest sigh."

There are five species of the *Primulæ* growing
wild in this kingdom.—The Bird's Eye Primrose,
(*P. farinosa*), growing in the north of Eng-
land; the Scottish Primrose (*P. Scotica*), a rare

species, together with the Oxlip, (*P. Elatior*), and common Cowslip, or Paigle (*P. veris*). The latter we shall notice in the month in which it blooms.

CINQUEFOIL.

Potentilla.

Class, Icosanndria;—Order, Polygynia;—Nat. Ord.
Rosaceæ.

The strawberry leaved Cinquefoil (*Potentilla Fragariastrum*) now displays its white blossoms on our banks. It belongs to the same natural family as the rose, plum, blackberry, apricot, &c. many of which produce esculent fruits, while the plants that produce them are often poisonous, from the presence of prussic acid, with which some of the species abound. This plant much resembles the wood or wild strawberry, for which it is often mistaken; indeed it was called by Linnæus *Fragaria sterilis*, or sterile strawberry, in consequence of the fruit being a few seeds placed on a dry receptacle, whilst in the wild strawberry, they are placed in a large pulpy one. The leaves are very similar to the strawberry, but are silky on both sides, and the petals are inversely heart-shaped; in the strawberry they are egg-shaped. The Silver Weed (*P. Anserina*), is another common

species, being found in abundance on road sides and in moist meadows, bearing a yellow blossom about the size of the Buttercup, and similar to it in shape; the leaves spread on the ground, are divided and whitish beneath, varying much in the degree of silkiness, according to soil and situation. The Shrubby Cinquefoil (*P. Fruticosa*) is not unfrequent in rocky and bushy places, but the strawberry-flowered Cinquefoil (*P. Rupestris*), is very rare, bearing large white flowers. The orange, spring, alpine, white, and three-toothed species grow also in particular localities in England and Scotland, whilst the common creeping Cinquefoil, (*P. Reptans*) grows in abundance about our hedges, banks, and borders of fields in most counties. The name is derived from *potens*, powerful, from the medicinal properties ascribed to some of the species.

THE COMMON COLTSFOOT.

Tussilágo farfara.

Class, Syngenesia;—Order, polygamia superflua;
N. O. Compositæ.

The blossoms of this plant appear before the leaves, are of a bright yellow, and finely rayed; it delights in moist and clayey soils, where it is too frequent, being a great pest to the farmer, whose power to

eradicate it from his ground, when once it has taken root, it will defy. The name is derived from *tussis*, cough; and *ago*, to expel. The leaves are bitter, and a tea made from them was formerly much used for coughs and pulmonary complaints, and are sometimes dried and smoked as tobacco by persons afflicted with the asthma; the downy substance of the leaves, dipped in a solution of salt-petre, makes excellent tinder. Another plant of similar habits and growing in sandy meadows where water occasionally stands, (to which it is very injurious) and also by river and brook sides, is called the Butter Bur (*Petasites vulgaris*) or (*Tusilago Petasites* of Linnæus). The leaves are very large, the root extensively creeping, and the flowers are of a pale flesh colour, growing in bunches. The Swedish farmers grow this plant near their bee-hives on account of its early blossoming. It is named from *Petasis*, a covering, from its large sized leaves, which are sometimes two feet in diameter, the largest of any British plant.

THE YEW TREE

Taxus baccata.

Diœcia, monadelphia. Nat. Ord. Coniferæ.

Taxus was the ancient name used by Pliny, which word is supposed to be derived from the Greek

for arrow, because it was said that arrows were poisoned with its berries; others think that erroneous because the berries are simply mucilaginous saccharine, and are frequently eaten. There are few objects of nature presenting more real interest to the mind than a noble aged tree, and at times these glories of the forest become associated, either from intrinsic character or local situation, with our best and purest feelings. The dark foliage of this tree intermingled with the light shades of those of other forest trees, adds greatly to the beauty of the woods of Monmouthshire, where it is often thickly interspersed; about the far-famed Windcliff the sombre yew is freely scattered, with the jutting rocks standing occasionally forward; and in some other parts of that county delightful scenery is presented to the admiring spectator, combining rocks, hills, valleys, plains, waters and woods, mottled with the evergreen yew. In our perambulations we find ourselves passing along a lovely and verdant valley, intersected by a meandering rivulet, with its crystal stream rippling over the smooth pebbles; with steep and rocky woods on each side thickly spotted with the dark yew and the lighter foliage of the ash, and sending forth rich and varied notes from the little throats of the sylvan choristers.

The Yew is celebrated in our country for its churchyard associations, and from its being used in feudal times in the manufacture of bows, the

weapon principally used by our warrior ancestors, before the introduction of fire-arms.

The custom of planting yew trees in churchyards has never been satisfactorily explained. Some have supposed that these trees were placed near the church for the purpose of affording branches on Palm Sunday ; others that they may be safe from cattle on account of their value for making bows ; others, that they were emblematical of silence and death ; and others, that they were useful for the purpose of affording shade or shelter to their places of worship when in more primitive form than they now appear, and some philosophically consider the yew as one of those evergreens which from its shade and shelter, was especially cultivated by the Druids in their sacred groves and around their sacrificial circles ; that when Christianity superseded Druidism the same places were chosen as the sites of the new worship. The yew is also employed in funerals, "by shroud of white stuck all with yew." In some places in England dead bodies were rubbed over with an infusion of its leaves, to preserve them from putrefaction ; and many of our poets allude to its connexion with ideas of death :

"Cheerless unsocial plant, that loves to dwell
'Midst skulls and coffins, epitaphs and worms."

In our churchyards the funeral yew casts its full and sombre shadows over the scene of sorrow and

decay, silently preaching lessons of comfort and immortal hope—and beneath

“ ——— The yew tree’s shade
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.”

From the dark and gloomy yew we turn our attention to the

SWEET VIOLET.

(*Viola odorata.*)

Class, Pentandria ; Order, monogynia ; N. O. Violariæ.

With its sweet purple and sometimes white blossoms which greet us from the shady banks :

“ Nurs’d on the lap of solitude and shade,
The Violet smiles embosom’d in the glade,
There sheds her spirit on the lonely gale,
Gem of seclusion ! treasure of the vale.

HEMANS.

This sweet flower is a special favourite of the poets, and is the emblem of faithfulness :

“ Violet is for faithfulness,
Which in me shall abide,
Hoping likewise that from your heart
You will not let it slide,”





PRIMROSE AND VIOLET

Writes an old poet, and Shakspeare makes frequent allusion to this lovely favourite; and in one place he writes

“Violets dim,
But sweeter than the lids of Juno’s eyes,
Or Cytherea’s breath;”

and in another part he says—

“They are gentle as zephyrs—
As zephyrs blowing below the violet.”

We have another beautiful comparison in a scene in the “Twelfth Night.”

“That strain again! it had a dying fall;
Oh! it came o’er my ear like the sweet south,
That breathes upon a bank of Violets,
Healing and giving odour.”

Many fables account for the origin of the name of the Violet; and poets, both ancient and modern, have endeavoured to fix its origin. To one it has suggested the image of a secluded maiden; to another of a beautiful eye dropping a tear: but perhaps the truest etymology is that which derives the name from *via*, wayside, from whence the wanderer is often greeted by its fragrance.

“Born on a sloping bank, ’neath an old hawthorn tree,
I shrank from the passing gaze like a maiden timidly,
Till the wooing winds of March came whispering
such a tale,
That I op’d my balmy stores to enrich the healthful
gale.”

Gifford's poem on a tuft of early Violets runs thus :—

“Sweet flowers, that from your humble beds
Thus prematurely dare to rise,
And trust your unprotected heads
To cold Aquarius' watery skies.

“Retire, retire ! these tepid airs
Are not the genial brood of May,
That sun with light malignant glares
And flatters only to betray.

“Stern winter's doom is not yet past—
Lo while your heads prepare to blow,
On icy pinions comes the blast,
And nips your roots, and lays you low.

“Alas ! for such ungentle doom !
But I will shield you and supply
A kindlier soil on which to bloom,
A nobler bed on which to die.

“Come then, ere yet the morning ray
Has drank the dew that gems your crest,
And drawn your balmiest sweets away,
O come and grace my Anna's breast.”

But perhaps the most delicious thing that has been said of the Violet is the simile of an Arabic poet named Eln Abruoni, who compares blue eyes weeping to violets filled with dew ; but Sir Walter Scott says,

“The Violet in her greenwood bower,
Where birchen boughs and hazels mingle,

May boast herself the fairest flower,
In glen or copse, or forest dingle.

“Though fair her gems of azure hue,
Beneath the dew-drop’s weight reclining,
I’ve seen an eye of lovelier blue,
More sweet through watery lustre shining.

“The summer’s sun that dew shall dry,
Ere yet the day be past its morrow,
Nor longer in my false love’s eye
Remained the tear of parting sorrow.”

The poetry, the romance, the scenery of any country is embroidered with the violet, from “Caledonia stern and wild,” to the flowery fields of fair Arcadia, and the same individual species is, and always has been, the object of homage.

“Sweet flower! Spring’s earliest loveliest gem,
While other flowers are idly sleeping,
Thou rear’st thy purple diadem;
Meekly from thy seclusion peeping.

“Thou from thy little secret mound,
Where diamond dew-drops shine above thee,
Scatterest thy modest fragrance round,
And well may Nature’s poets love thee

“Thine is a short swift reign I know—
But here thy spirit still pervading
New *Violet* tufts again shall blow,
Then fade away as thou art fading,

“And be renew’d; the hope how blest,
O may that hope desert me never!

Like thee to sleep on nature's breast,
And wake again and bloom for ever."

The Violet while it pleases by its modest retiring beauty, possesses the additional charm of the most exquisite of all perfumes, which, inhaled with the invigorating breezes of spring, always brings in remembrance a lively conception of that delightful season. Thus in the language of poetry, "the violet scented gale" is synonymous with those accumulations of sweets which we derive from odours, flowers and balmy breezes, and the gratification we experience from the contemplation of renovated nature once more bursting forth in fulness, beauty and perfection.

"O woman's love deep in the heart
Is like the Violet flower,
That lifts its modest head apart
In some sequestered bower."

Have we not hunted after the Violet with hearts overflowing with pleasure? and where is the heart to which the Violet does not speak of childhood? Where is the one to whom the odour does not breathe of holiday seasons and healthful joy? with the Lesser Celandine intermingling we sometimes discover the Violet showering its sweet perfume around, and

"Under the hedge all safe and warm,
Sheltered from boisterous wind and storm,

We Violets lie
With each small eye
Closely shut while the cold goes by.

“ You look at the bank, ’mid the biting frost,
And you sigh and say we’re dead and lost,
But lady stay
For a sunny day,
And you’ll find us again alive and gay.

“ On mossy banks under forest trees
You’ll find us crowing in days like these,
Purple and blue
And white ones too,
Peep at the sun and wait for you.

“ By maids and matrons, by old and young,
By rich and poor our praise is sung,
And the blind man sighs
When his sightless eyes
He turns to the spot where our perfumes rise.

“ There is not a garden the country through,
Where they plant not violets white and blue;
By princely hall,
And cottage small,
For we’re sought, and cherish’d, and cull’d by all.

“ Yet grand parterres and stiff-trimmed beds
But ill become our modest heads,
We’d rather run
In shadow and sun,
On the banks where our merry lives first begun.

“ There, where the birkin-boughs silvery shine,
Gleams o’er the hawthorn and frail woodbine

Moss deep and green
Lies thick between
The plots where we violet flowers are seen.

“And the small gay celandine’s stars of gold,
Rise sparkling beside our purple’s fold;—
Such a regal show
Is rare I trow,
Save on the banks where violets glow.”

With all persons the Violet is a great favourite,
and is often sought after in its lonely and shady
retreat.

‘Sweet lowly plant! once more I bend
To hail thy presence here,
Like a beloved returning friend
From absence doubly dear.

‘Wert thou for ever in our sight,
Might we not love thee less?
But now thou bringest new delight,
Thou still hast power to bless;

‘And still thine exquisite perfume
Is precious as of old;
And still thy modest tender bloom
It joys me to behold.

‘It joys and cheers, whene’er I see
Pain on earth’s meek ones press,
To think the storm that rends the tree,
Scathes not thy lowliness.

‘And thus may human weakness find
E’en in thy lowly flower,

An image cheering to the mind
In many a trying hour."

The following lines by Barton, a writer who attracted notice for his elegant simplicity and purity of style and feeling, on this favourite flower, deserves insertion ; the staple of his whole poems is description and meditation—description of quiet home scenery sweetly and feelingly wrought out, and meditation overshadowed with tenderness and exalted by devotion.

"Beautiful are you in your lowliness,
Bright in your hues, delicious in your scent,
Lowly your modest blossoms downward bent,
As shrinking from our eyes yet prompt to bless
The passer-by with fragrance, and express
How gracefully, though mutely eloquent
Are unobtrusive worth, and meek content,
Rejoicing in their own obscure recess.
Delightful flow'rets ! at the voice of spring
Your buds unfolded to its sunbeams bright,
And though your blossom soon shall fade from sight,
Above your lonely birth-place birds shall sing,
And from your clustering leaves the glow-worm fling
The emerald glory of its earth-born light."

Like the Primrose the Violet is a native of both hemispheres, and hardily defies the blasts of the alpine mountains, while on our banks and in our woods it braves the east winds. The Sweet Violet is rare in Scotland, and was formerly used for a preparation as a cosmetic by the Highland ladies.

"Sweetest little purple flower,
Found most oft by ruin'd tower,
Or in the woodland, or the vale,
Sending forth thy odorous gale.

"Thy lovely form of deepen'd hue
Is bathed in morn and evening dew,
And in return for nature's store
Thy balmy fragrance thou dost pour.

"Thou liv'st unseen and quite retired,
By all thy kindred unadmired,
Save the pale primrose, who, like thee,
Lies hidden in obscurity.

"So virtue shuns the vulgar gaze,
Nor courts the empty breath of praise,
But in the solitary glade
Shines forth in Beauty's self array'd."

EMMA PRIOR.

Nearly all the poets seem to have turned their attention to this fragrant dweller of the woodland shade, from whence the senses are regaled by their delicious perfume. The following lines were suggested on seeing two violets early in the year:—

"Twins of the spring,
What airs of wild wood sweets
Lurk in your fragrant leaves !
What dreams ye bring
Of early, nameless joys, that youth first greets
Ere time the heart bereaves
Of all its gladness.

“ Oh ! vague delight,
Which hails the vernal day
Of youthful flowery morn,
With hope as bright
As nature's robe is gorgeously gay ;
Ere the fresh heart is worn,
By withering sadness.

“ Oh ! vague delight,
No more in after day
Ye ever can return ;
A mildew'd blight
Obscures the brightness of that matin ray ;
And then we just discern
Our joys are madness.

“ Children of spring,
Yet still your blossoms bear,
Power of refined delight,
Ye bid me sing
Of dreams and days the vulgar cannot share,
In fortune's proud despite,
I give thee welcoming.”

A wine from the flowers of the Sweet Violet was much used by the Romans, and the sherbet of the Turks is composed of Violet syrup and water.

Mrs. Hemans, whose purity of mind is seen in all her verse, and her love of nature like Wordsworth's, was a delicate blending of our deep inward emotions with their symbols and emblems without ; in her “last wish,” says,

“ Go to the forest shade,
Seek thou the well known glade

Where heavy with sweet dew, the violets lie,
Gleaming through moss tufts deep,
Like dark eyes filled with sleep,
And bathed in hues of summer's midnight sky.

“Bring me their buds to shed
Around my dying head
A breath of May, and of the wood's repose,
For I in sooth depart
With a reluctant heart,
That fain would linger where the bright sun glows.

“Fain would I stay with thee—
Alas ! this may not be ;
Yet bring me still the gift of happier hours,
Go where the fountain's breast
Catches in glassy rest,
The dim green light that pours through laurel bowers.

“I know how softly bright,
Steeped in that tender light,
The water-lilies tremble there e'en now
Go to the pure stream's edge,
And from its whispering sedge,
Bring me those flowers to cool my fever'd brow.”

The stalks of the Sweet Violet spring from near the root, the leaves are heart-shaped, and the calyx leaves obtuse. The common Dog's-tooth Violet, (*Viola canina*), is somewhat similar in general appearance, but the calyx leaves are acuminate, and the flower stalks are channelled and spring from the stems, and it is also destitute of scent.

“Deceitful plant, from thee no odours rise
To perfume the air, or scent the passing gale,

Although thy blossoms wear the modest guise
Of her, the sweetest offspring of the shade,
Yet not like her's, still shunning to be seen,
And by their fragrant breath alone betray'd."

It hangs its cheerful blue or purple blossoms on our banks, woods, and dry places. In mountainous situations the blossoms are large and numerous, but in sandy, dry, and barren places the whole plant is very small. Like the Wild Rose it most likely received its specific name to mark its inferiority to the scented kind.

The Marsh Violet (*Viola palustris*) blooms in abundance in bogs and marshy ground in the north, and on the mountains of Scotland; the blossoms are a very pale blue with purple streaks. The Cream Violet (*V. lactea*) also blooms on mountains and boggy heaths, and the Yellow Mountain Violet (*V. lutea*) or yellow Pansy, is often found on the mountainous pastures of Wales and in the north of England—the stem is much branched at the base, and the leaves an oblong egg-shaped, with crenated edges, the flowers are of a sulphur colour, larger than the common Pansy, and there is a variety with the petals all purple. Bryant has addressed the following lines to this species.

"When beechen buds begin to swell
And woods the blue bird's warble know,
The yellow violet's modest bell
Peeps from the last year's leaves below.

“ Ere russet fields their green resume,
Sweet flower, I love in forest bare,
To meet thee, when thy sweet perfume
Alone is in the virgin air.

“ Of all her train, the hands of spring
First plants thee in the watery mould,
And I have seen thee blossoming
Beneath the snow-banks’ edges cold.

“ Thy parent sun, who bade thee view
Pale skies, and chilling moisture sip,
Has bathed thee in his own bright hue,
And streaked with jet thy glowing lip.

“ Yet slight thy form and low thy seat,
And earthward bent thy gentle eye,
Unapt the passing view to meet,
When loftier flowers are flaunting nigh.

“ Oft in the sunless April day,
Thy early smile has stayed my walk,
But midst the gorgeous blooms of May
I pass’d thee on thy humble stalk.

“ So they who climb to wealth forget
The friends in darker fortune’s tried,
I copied them—but I regret
That I should ape the ways of pride.

“ And when again the genial hour
Awakes the painted tribes of light,
I’ll not o’erlook the modest flower
That made the woods of April bright.”

Although the poet has penned the foregoing

verses to the yellow violet, we should imagine he alluded to the Pansy Violet or Heartsease, which is often of a pale yellow colour, with a black spot on the lower petal, when he says its "glowing lip is streaked with jet." The Heartsease we shall notice during the next month, as it will then be in bloom. Among all the species of the violet the sweet one is the favourite, on account of its connexion with scenes and seasons dear to all, and has therefore been long and often celebrated.

THE ALDER.

(*Alnus glutinosa.*)

Class, Monœcia. Order, Tetragynia. N. O. Amnataceæ.

Is a tree with spreading branches, and smooth bark; growing in abundance in moist situations; often on the margin of our rivers, lakes and streams, we find it throwing the shadow of its branches on the surface of the smooth waters gliding at its feet. The wood of this tree is soft, but submerged in water or buried under-ground it is almost imperishable; it is therefore held in estimation for forming piles, &c. for the support of buildings in boggy situations. The celebrated and ancient bridge called the Rialto, at Venice, is built on alder piles. The wood is also valued for cabinet

work, being often beautifully veined. The bark is used by tanners and leather dressers, as well as dyers: and charcoal made from the wood of this tree is highly estimated for the manufacture of gunpowder. Virgil mentions it as furnishing the materials for boats or canoes, which were formed out of its hollowed trunk. Its name is derived from the Celtic *al*, *near*, and *lan*, the *river bank*. "The alders dank that fringe the pool," bears blossoms similar to the hazel; the barren flowers are collected into a catkin or pendulous spike, and contains four stamens in each, and the fertile flowers are much smaller, oval, and imbricated all round, with deep red scales; the leaves of the tree are roundish, wedge-shaped, obtuse and cut at the edges. Upon withdrawing our attention from this tree, we cast our eyes upon the moist and shady banks out of which it springs, and there we often behold large patches of the

COMMON GOLDEN SAXIFRAGE.

(*Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*.)

Class, Decandria. Order, Digynia; N. O. Saxifragæ.

THIS little plant delights in wet shady situations, its little blossom-stalks are about three inches high, bearing a cluster of pale yellow flowers at the top, the leaves are situated opposite on the

stem, from which circumstance it derives its specific name. It is very common, and patches of it often extend for several feet. We have also another species not so frequently seen, with the leaves alternately placed on the stem; it grows in the same situations, is rather higher in growth, and of a darker colour. The name is derived from the Greek words *gold* and *spleen*, a disease for which the plant was supposed to be a cure.

From the banks of the streamlet we turn our footsteps to the wood, where we find another little plant of a paler hue, springing under the shelter of the bushes, called the

TUBEROUS MOSCHATELL.

(*Adoxa moschatellina.*)

Class, Octandria. Order, Tetragynia. N. O. Araliaceæ.

We often pass this unobtrusive little plant unnoticed, although when once discovered, we are glad to have an opportunity to pick it whilst sauntering in the sylvan shade, and repeatedly to examine its formation.

“ A bonnie wee flower grew green in the wuds,
Like a twinkling wee star amang the cluds !
And the langer it levit the greener it grew,
For 'twas lulled by the winds, and fed by the dew.
Oh ! fresh was the air where it reared its head,
Wi' the radiance and odour its young leaves shed.”

Five blossoms are situated at the termination of its slender and almost transparent stalk, which is about two inches in length: four of the blossoms open their petals sideways, and a single blossom is situated on the top, the whole forming a globose head; the root consists of a little tuber of a delicate colour. This lovely little plant has a musky smell in the morning and evening when the dew is upon it.

“Like timid jasmine buds, that keep
Their odour to themselves all day,
And when the sunlight dies away,
Let the delicious secret out
To every breeze that roams about.”

This flower is named from the Greek *a* and *doxa*, signifying *without glory*, from the insignificant aspect of the plant.

Amongst other flowers and shrubs blossoming towards the end of this month we may enumerate the *Common Whitlow Grass*, (*Draba verna*), on wall tops; *Little mouse-ear chickweed* (*Cerastium semidecandrum*), wall tops; *Strawberry-leaved Cinquefoil* (*Potentilla Fragariastum*), dry banks; *Wood Spurge* (*Euphorbia amygdaloides*), woods; *Yellow Gagea* (*Gagea lutea*), woods and pastures; *Rock Hutchinsia*, (*Hutchinsia petrea*), rocks, York, Kent, and west of England; *Bristol Rock Cress*, (*Arabis stricta*), St. Vincent's rock, Clifton, rare; *Bitter Purple Willow* (*Salix purpurea*), Norwich, Melrose; *Early Knappia* (*Knappia agrostidea*), rare, sandy pastures, Wales, Essex.

APRIL.



"Now a smile and now a frown,
Brightening now, and now cast down;
Now 'tis cheerful, now it lowers,
Yet sunshine in the midst of showers,
Now the sky is calm and clear,
Now the frowning clouds appear,
Evanescent soon they fly,
Calm and clear again the sky."

APRIL is proverbial for its variableness. It generally begins with raw and unpleasant weather, then come warm and bright days of sunshine, but they are frequently overcast with clouds and chilled with showers. Still April has been celebrated as the sweetest month of the year, partly because it ushers in "the May," and partly for its own sake. "It is worth two Mays," says a modern author, "because it tells tales of May in every sigh that it breathes, and every tear that it lets fall." It is the herald, the prophecy, the promise, the foretaste of the beauties that are to follow it, of all and more—of all the delights of summer, and all the pride and pomp of glorious

autumn. It is fraught with beauties that no other month can bring before us, and "it bears a glass which shows us many more." Its life is one sweet alternation of smiles, and sighs and tears; and tears, sighs and smiles, till it is consummated at last in the open laughter of May.

"April, sweet month, the daintiest of all,
Fair thee befall;
April, fond hope of fruits that lie
In buds of swathing cotton wrapt,
There closely lapt,
Nursing their tender infancy.

"April, thou dost thy yellow green and blue
All around thee strew,
When as thou goest, the grassy floor
Is with a million flowers depeint,
Whose colours quaint,
Have diaper'd the meadows o'er.

"April, at whose glad coming zephyrs rise
With whispered sighs,
Then on their light wing brush away,
And hang amid the woodlands fresh
Their airy mesh,
To tangle Flora on her way.

"April, it is thy hand that doth unlock
From plain and rock,
Odours and hues, a balmy store,
That breathing lie on Nature's breast,
So richly blest,
That earth and heaven can ask no more.

“ April, the hawthorn and the eglantine,
Purple woodbine,
Streak’d pink, and lily-cup, and rose,
And thyme and marjoram are spreading
Where thou art treading,
And their sweet eyes for thee uncloze.

“ The little nightingale sits singing aye,
On leafy spray,
And in her fitful strain doth run,
A thousand and a thousand changes
With voice that ranges
Through every sweet division.

“ Sweet month, thou see’st at this jocund prime,
Of the spring-time,
The hives pour out their lusty young,
And hear’st the yellow bees that ply
With laden thigh
Murmuring the flowery wilds among.

“ May shall with pomp his wavy wreath unfold,
His fruits of gold,
His fertilizing dewes that swell
In manna on each spike and stem,
And like a gem,
Red honey in the waxen cell.

“ Who will, may praise him ; but my voice shall be,
Sweet month, for thee ;
Thou that to her dost owe thy name,
Who saw the sea-wave’s foamy tide
Swell and divide,
Whence forth to life and light she came.”

April is generally represented as a youth or

maiden, winged, and robed in green, crowned with a garland of myrtle and hawthorn buds, holding in one hand primroses and violets, and in the other the sign of the zodiac, Taurus; into which constellation it enters on the 19th of the month. It is the only month in the year which is not called after the Roman deities. Its name is derived from the Latin word *aperire*, to open, because the earth opens itself and produces its fruit. The Romans dedicated this month to Venus. The Saxons termed it Ester, or *Easter monath*: either from the feast of their goddess Eastre, Easter, or Eoster, or because the winds blow generally from the east at this season.

The new-born Daisies now stud the ground, and a sweet flush of new green has started up to the face of the meadows, and the low and creeping plants push forth their various shaped leaves, stars, fans, blades, fingers, and a score of other fanciful forms.

“ Break from your chains, ye lingering streams,
Rise blossoms, from your wintry dreams ;
Drear fields, your robes of verdure take ;
Birds, from your trance of silence wake ;
Glad trees, resume your leafy crown ;
Shrubs, o’er the mirror brooks look down ;
Bland zephyrs, wheresoe’er ye stray,
The spring doth call you, come away.
Thou too, my soul, with quicken’d force,
Pursue thy brief, thy measured course ;
With grateful zeal each power employ ;
Catch vigour from creation’s joy ;

And deeply, on thy shortened span,
Stamp love to God, and love to man."

It is true that a large portion of this tangled wilderness is neglected by the casual observer, or dismissed from his regard as useless and noxious weeds. Let the following lines be a sufficient reproof.

"How many plants—we call them weeds,
Against our wishes grow ;
And scatter far their various seeds,
With all the winds that blow.

"Man grumbles when he sees them rise
To foul his husbandry ;
Kind providence this way supplies
His lesser family.

"Scattered and small, they 'scape our eyes,
But are not wasted there ;
Safe they in clefts and furrows lie,
The little birds find where."

Spring disdains not the moist-eyed April : like childhood, this sweet month has rich drops between her sunshine ; but, like it, she sows in tears only to reap in joy.

THE WOOD SORREL.

(Oxalis acetosella,)

Class, Decandria. Order, Pentagynia. Nat. Ord.
Oxalideæ.

In our woods and shady lanes, or in the midst of some lonely vale, fertile as lovely, and peaceful as fertile ; down which winds a crystal streamlet, the haunt of the trout, whose meadows are covered with the large yellow blossoms of the Marsh Marigold (*Caltha palustris*), and the pretty purplish white flowers of the common Bitter Cress (*Cardamine pratensis*), and which seems to be enriched with an almost unaccountable superabundant fruitfulness, the *Oxalis* rises its pencilled head from the moist banks, the

“Wood sorrel that hangs her cups,
Ere their frail form and streaky veins decay
O’er her pale verdure ; till parental care
Inclines the shortening stems, and to the shade
Of closing leaves her infant race withdraws.”

GISBORNE.

The leaves are on long, weak, hairy stems, the leaflets drooping and purple at the back—the leaves are divided in three parts, similar to the clover leaf, and each division is inversely heart-shaped—the flower stalks are longer than the leaves, each

bearing a delicate, drooping, inodorous white flower, prettily streaked with purple: the whole plant has an agreeable acid flavour; and oxalic acid is extracted from it. On the hedge banks and in woods it often has for its companion

THE WOOD ANEMONE.

(*Anemone nemorosa.*)

Class, Polyandria; Order, Polygynia; Nat. Ord.,
Ranunculaceæ.

It derives its name from *Anemos*, the wind, and is often called the wind flower.

“Then thickly strewn in woodland bowers,
Anemonies their stars unfold,
Then spring the sorrel’s veined flowers,
And rich in variegated gold.”

Three divided leaves stand round at some distance from the blossom, on the single flowered stem.

“The coy Anemone that ne’er discloses
Her lips, until they’re blown on by the wind,”

presents a pleasing and cheerful appearance thickly scattered among the stumps of a wood, and rising between the withered leaves which cover the ground. The blossoms are generally white, but sometimes they have a delicate pink tinge like a maiden’s blush, and the back is often streaked.

The flower is admired by every one, and some fancy it has a pleasant odour, but others cannot discover any scent. It is considered injurious to cattle, and the Egyptians regarded it as the emblem of sickness. The blossoms are sensitive of the changes of the weather, and close before a storm, and

“ Shrinking from the chilly night,
Droop and shut up ;”

but as soon as the sun shines upon it, or daylight breaks, it again expands its blossoms to salute it.

“ Beautiful Anemone !
Say do the fairies streak
The blushes on thy cheek,
When moonlight sleeps upon thee ?

“ Beautiful Anemone !
Do not they pile the gold
Which thy pure vases hold,
Heaping their favours on thee.

“ Beautiful Anemone !
Then round thy lovely bell,
Surely they breathe a spell
To draw all hearts unto thee.

“ Beautiful Anemone !
Thou fairy gifted flower,
We own thy magic power,
And fondly linger near thee.”

Upon entering a wood that has lately been cut

we are greeted by myriads of these sweet perennial blossoms, and

“Flower of the wildwood ! your home is there,
’Mid all that is fragrant, all that is fair,
Where the wood-mouse makes his home in earth,
Where gnat and butterfly have their birth,
Where leaves are dancing over each flower,
Fanning it well in the noontide hour,
And the breath of the wind is murmuring low,
As branches are bending to and fro.”

Another species called the Pasque flower (*Anemone Pulsatilla*) has handsome purple flowers, and grows in chalky pastures ; besides which we have the yellow wood Anemone (*A. ranunculoides*), growing in Kent and Herts ; and the mountain Anemone (*A. appenina*), found in Bedfordshire, Essex, and Monmouthshire.

THE CUCKOO PINT.

(*Arum maculatum*.)

Class, Monœcia. Order, Polyandria. N. O. Aroideæ.

This is a very singular plant, the sheath rises on the banks of our hedges in March, and soon afterwards, on opening it a club-shaped spadix shows itself, of a dull purple colour, with a number of protuberances beneath of a pale yellow or white colour : the leaves are large, halbert-shaped, shining, and

spotted with black. It is a very common plant in England. The berries remain during winter, crowded into an oblong spike of a bright scarlet colour, after the leaves and spadix have decayed. The tuberous root affords an abundant amylaceous substance, which, if properly prepared, and the acrid juice expressed, forms an excellent substitute for wheat flour, and is sold in some places for that purpose. Every part of the

“ Arum, that in mantling hood conceals
Her sanguine club, and spreads her spotted leaf,
Arm'd with keen tortures for the unwary tongue,”

whilst in a recent state is so acrid, that if tasted it leaves upon the tongue a painful stinging sensation. The leaves were formerly much used by washerwomen, for the purpose of softening the water. It is usually known to the young by the name of ladies' fingers. We now turn in our rambles from the edge bank to the wood, where we behold the graceful branches of the

COMMON BIRCH.

(*Betula alba.*)

Class, Monœcia. Ord Polyandria. N. O. Amentaceæ.

“ Where weeps the birch of silver bark,
And long dishevelled hair.”

This tree is one of the chief ornaments of wild and mountainous scenery, particularly in Wales.

The "light airy pendant birch" as an ornamental tree in landscape gardening is seldom surpassed, and Coleridge terms it the

"Most beautiful
Of forest trees, the lady of the wood."

It is not unfrequent in Scotland, where the drooping birch (*B. pendula*) a variety of the preceding, with its white rind, forms one of the most beautiful and bewitching features of the romantic scenery of that country, and in Ireland few hilly or wild tracts are destitute of the

"Well lettered birch,
Which supplies law, and physic, and grace for the
church."

The leaves of the birch exhale a pleasing fragrance, so that it has more than mere beauty to recommend it, and is noticed by Burns as the "fragrant Birk." The rind is used in tanning the well-known Russia leather. In the spring, when the sap begins to rise, a juice is extracted by boring, from which birch wine is made, and the slender twigs are made into brooms. The male flowers are in a scaly catkin, which contains four chives, and the female blossoms are produced on the same tree, and are also in a scaly catkin.

THE DAISY.

(Bellis perennis.)

Syngenesia superflua. N. O. Compositæ.

We will now speak of Burns' "wee modest crimson tipped flower." It is a compound flower like the corn marigold, chamomile, and many others, having a variety of tubes in the centre or disc, each containing stamens and pistils, whilst those of the ray or white florets contain a pistil only.

The Daisy is a flower associated with all the sports of childhood and the delights of innocence; and no less dear to us in after years for the many delightful associations it recalls to our memory.

" Simple flowers although ye be,
Ye are dearly loved by me,
Simple children—ye no less
Touch me with your lowliness,
Both my native fields adorn,
Joyous at the breath of morn;
Both when comes the dewy night
Seek repose in slumber's light;
And when shines the morning ray
Re-awaken like the day—
He was lowly too—the Power
Who created child and flower!
Poets have not scorned to sing
Daisies—and a mighty king,

Brave and pious, good and wise,
 Choose one for his quaint device;
 One a queen decreed to be
 Guerdon for sweet poetry.
 Flowers and children—emblems meet
 Of all things innocent and sweet;
 Gifts of tenderness and love,
 Sent to bless us from above,
 Smile, oh ! smile on me, and pour
 Your fragrance round me evermore.”

Dry pastures during the early spring months, and indeed nearly the whole year, are covered with “the little daizee that at evening closes.” It was highly thought of by Chaucer, who says,

“Of all the flowres in the mede
 Then love I most these flowres white and rede,
 Such that men call daisies in our town,
 To them I have so great affection.”

This unfading little flower is not planted here and there with sparing hand, but scattered freely. Dr. Good has a beautiful poem on this plant, which it may not be uninteresting to quote.

“Not worlds on worlds in phalanx deep
 Need we to prove a God is here,
 The Daisy fresh from winter’s sleep,
 Tells of his hand in lines as clear.

“For who but He that arched the skies,
 And pours the day spring’s living flood,
 Wondrous alike in all he tries,
 Could raise the Daisy’s purple bud ?

“ Mould its green cup, its wiry stem,
Its fringed border nicely spin,
And cut the gold embossed gem,
That, set in silver, gleams within?—

“Then fling it, unrestrained and free,
O'er hill and dale and desert sod;
That man where'er he walks may see,
At every step, the stamp of God.”

Its rich disc of gold and white ray beautifully tinged with crimson, merits the name of the eye of day, it opens with the rising sun and closes when he sinks in the west.

“When smitten by the morning ray,
I see thee rise alert and gay,
Then cheerful flower my spirits play
With kindred gladness.
And when at dusk by dews depress'd,
Thou sinks't, the image of my rest,
Hath often eased my pensive breast
Of careful sadness.”

The simple notice that the Daisy grows everywhere, where pastures and meadows are to be met with, is perfectly sufficient to give it a high claim to our regard. It is named from *Bellus*, pretty. In France it is called *Marguerite*, a term expressive of great beauty, from *Margarita*, a pearl.

Montgomery has penned the following excellent lines on it:

“ There is a flower, a little flower,
With silver crest and golden eye,
That welcomes every changing hour,
And weathers every sky.

“ The prouder beauties of the field,
In gay, but quick succession shine,
Race after race their honours yield,
They flourish and decline,

“ But this small flower to nature dear,
While moon and stars their courses run,
Wreathes the whole circle of the year,
Companion of the sun.

“ It smiles upon the lap of May,
To sultry August spreads its charms,
Lights pale November on its way,
And twines December's arms.

“ The purple heath, the golden broom,
On moory mountains catch the gale,
O'er lawns the lily sheds perfume,
The violet in the vale.

“ But this bold flow'ret climbs the hill,
Hides in the forest, haunts the glen,
Plays on the margin of the rill,
Peeps round the fox's den.

“ Within the garden's cultured round,
It shares the sweet carnation bed,
And blooms on consecrated ground
In honour of the dead.

“ The lambkin crops its crimson gem,
The wild bee murmurs on its breast,

The blue-fly bends its pensile stem,
That decks the skylark's nest.

"'Tis Flora's page in every place,
In every season fresh and fair,
It opens with perennial grace,
And blossoms every where.

"On waste and woodland, rock and plain,
Its humble buds unheeded rise,
The rose has but a summer's reign,
The Daisy never dies."

A thousand indefinable emotions are blended with this simple flower, it recalls to mind the bright days of our childhood—the race in the meadows—the rambles in the castle field—the necklaces made of chains of this flower, and as Shakspeare writes, "whose white investments figure innocence." The Daisy is the flower which among all others is most certain to recall those delightful recreations—those infantine sports—it is to flowers what the cuckoo is to birds in our young day.

"Trampled under foot,
The Daisy lives, and strikes its little root
Into the lap of time, centuries may come
And pass away into the silent tomb,
And still the child, hid in the womb of time
Shall be forgotten, like a churchyard stone,
Or lingering lie, unnoticed and alone,
When eighteen hundred years, our common date,
Grow many thousands in their marching state ;

Aye, still the child, with pleasure in his eye,
Shall cry 'the Daisy'—a familiar cry—
And run to pluck it, in the self-same state ;
And like a child himself when all was new—
Might smile with wonder, and take notice too ;
Its little golden bosom filled with snow,
Might win e'en Eve to stoop adown and show
Her partner Adam, in the silken grass
The little gem, that smiled where pleasure was,
And, loving Eve, from Eden followed ill
And bloomed with sorrow,—and lives smiling still,
As once in Eden, under Heaven's breath,
So now on earth, and on the lap of death,
It smiles for ever.

CLARE.

The Daisy has been made by the poets emblematical of innocence. Dr. Cary was much delighted when in India upon seeing a Daisy spring up, having been brought from England among other seeds, and the following verses were written on that account by Montgomery :

"Thrice welcome, little English flower !
Thy mother-country's white and red,
In Rose or Lily, till this hour
Never to me such beauty shed ;
Transplanted from thy island bed,
A treasure in a grain of earth,
Strange, as a spirit from the dead
Thy embryo sprang to birth.

"Thrice welcome, little English flower !
Whose tribe beneath our native skies
Shut close their leaves while vapours lour ;
But when the sun's gay beams arise,

With unabashed but modest eyes,
Follow his motion to the west;
Nor cease to gaze till daylight dies,
Then fold themselves to rest.

“Thrice welcome, little English flower!
To this resplendent hemisphere,
Where Flora’s giant offspring tower
In gorgeous liveries all the year;
Thou, only thou, art little here,
Like worth unfriended and unknown,
Yet to my British heart more dear
Than all the torrid zone.

“Thrice welcome, little English flower!
Of early scenes beloved by me,
While happy in my father’s bower,
Thou shalt the blithe memorial be;
The fairy sports of infancy,
Youth’s golden age, and manhood’s prime,
Home, country, kindred, friends—with thee,
Are mine in this far clime.

“Thrice welcome, little English flower!
I’ll rear thee with a trembling hand;
O for the April sun and shower,
The sweet May dews of that fair land,
Where daisies thick as star-light stand
In every walk!—that here might shoot
Thy scions, and thy buds expand
A hundred from one root.

“Thrice welcome, little English flower!
To me the pledge of hope unseen:
When sorrow would my soul o’erpower
For joys that were or might have been,

I'll call to mind, how—fresh and green—
I saw thee waking from the dust ;
Then turn to Heaven with brow serene,
And place in God my trust."

The admiration with which this flower has been surveyed we may find from the following extract from Ossian's poems.—“ We have seen, O Malvina, we have seen the infant you regret, reclining on a light mist. It approached us, and has shed on our fields a harvest of new flowers. Look, O Malvina, among these flowers we distinguish one with a golden disk, surrounded by silver leaves,—a sweet tinge of crimson adorns its delicate rays—waved by the gentle winds we might call it a little infant playing in a green meadow, and the flower of thy bosom has given a new flower to the Hills of Cromla.”

“ Hail ! little daisy, how I love
To see thy little head
Meekly adorning field or grove,
Or garden flower bed !

“ Or by the mansion, or the cot,
Or by the purling stream,
I love to see thee, gentle flower,
With white and golden gleam.

“ Whether upon the mountain's brow,
Or in the valley deep ;
Whether upon the wall you grow,
Or on the craggy steep ;

“There dost thou blossom all the same,
Free as the morning air;
Oh! how I love to look on thee,
All smiling meek and fair!

“And thou art on the dewy green
The sweet spring time to cheer;
Thou bloom’st upon each changing scene,
Throughout the changing year.

“Smiling alike on morn and eve—
In simple robings dress’d;
I fondly love thee, gentle flower,
With white and golden crest.”

The Daisy has been consecrated by the Celts to infancy; it is, say they, “the flower of innocence,” the flower of the new born.

“That old favorite the Daisy, born
By millions in the balmy vernal morn,
The Child’s own Flower.”

This first prize of childhood,—and afterwards not less dear to us from the many associations connected with it,—spangles the verdant meadows in profusion for at least six months in the year; and how often has it been our pleasing task to watch the innocent little children, with health blooming on their cheeks, romping on the green sward, and filling their pinafores with this universal favorite,—the

"Bright flower, whose home is everywhere,
 A pilgrim bold in nature's care;
 And oft the long year through the heir
 Of joy and sorrow.
 Methinks that there abides in thee
 Some concord with humanity,
 Given to no other flower I see
 The forest through!
 And wherefore, man is soon depress'd,
 A thoughtless thing, who once unblest,
 Does little on his memory rest,
 Or on his reason.
 But thou would'st teach him how to find
 A shelter under every wind;
 A hope for times that are unkind,
 And every season."

In concluding our associations with the Daisy, we annex the affecting lines composed by the peasant poet, on turning one down with the plough, which must strike a chord of sympathy in every heart.—They speak to the dullest in language that cannot be misunderstood; and no less vividly do they emblem the frailty of man, who "cometh forth as a flower and is cut down."

"Wee modest crimson tipped flower,
 Thou'st met me in an evil hour,
 For I maun crush amang the stour
 Thy slender stem;
 To spare thee now is past my power,
 Thou bonnie gem.

"Alas! it's no thy neebor sweet,
 The bonnie lark, companion meet!

Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet,
Wi' speckled breast,
When upward springing blithe to greet
The purplin east.

"Cauld blew the bitter biting north
Upon thy early, humble birth;
Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
Amid the storm,
Scarce reared above the parent earth
Thy tender form.

"The flaunting flowers our gardens yield,
High sheltering woods and wa's maun shield!
But thou, beneath the random bield
O' clod or stane,
Adorn'st the histie stibble field,
Unseen, alane.

"There in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snowy bosom sunward spread,
Thou lift'st thy unassuming head,
In humble guise;
But now the share uptears thy bed,
And low thou lies.

"Such is the fate of artless maid,
Sweet flow'ret of the rural shade,
By love's simplicity betrayed,
And guileless trust,
Till she, like thee, all soiled, is laid
Low i' the dust.

"Such is the fate of simple bard,
On life's rough ocean luckless starr'd!
Unskilful he to note the card

Of prudent lore,
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
And whelm him o'er.

"Such fate to suffering worth is given,
Who long with wants and woes has striven,
By human pride and cunning driven
To misery's brink,
Till wrench'd of every stay but heaven,
He ruined sink.

"Even thou who mourn'st the Daisy's fate,
That fate is thine—no distant date,
Stern ruin's ploughshare drives elate,
Full on thy bloom,
Till crushed, beneath the furrow's weight
Shall be thy doom."

THE BITTER CRESS.

A variety of cresses are now in bloom, which we shall hereafter enumerate; but at present we shall only allude to the different species of Bitter Cress and Swine's Cress.—The Bitter Cress belongs to the Linnean class *tetradynamia*, which is distinguished from the class *hexandria* by having *four* long and *two* short stamens, instead of six of equal length; and to the order *siliquosa*—that is, bearing a long pod or seed vessel: it is arranged in the natural system of Jussieu, among the *Cruciferae*, or cross formed flowers—having four petals to the blossom. The Hairy Bitter Cress (*Cardamine hirsuta*) bears a number of dimi-

native blossoms, varying much in size according to the situation in which it grows; the blossoms are white, and attain the largest size when growing in moist situations;—it is frequently found on wall tops, when the plant is altogether often not more than two inches in height. The largest of the species is the Large-flowered Bitter Cress (*Cardamine armara*), which grows in wet meadows, but is not so frequently met with as the Common Bitter Cress (*Cardamine pratensis*), which is found in great abundance in our moist fields: it is sometimes called Ladies' Smock, from its having the appearance, as some think, at a distance, of a quantity of linen laid out to bleach. The blossoms are of a whitish or light lavender colour, or, as Shakspeare terms it, "silver white," when he alludes to it in the following lines:—

"When daisies pied, and violets blue,
And ladies' smocks all silver white,
And cuckoo buds of yellow hue,
Do paint the meadows with delight."

This plant is also known by the name of the Cuckoo flower, because it is one of the few flowers that blossom about the time of the cuckoo's arrival. Shakspeare in the above lines, in speaking of "Cuckoo buds of yellow hue," must have alluded to the Buttercup (*Ranunculus bulbosa*), which is now in bloom, and displays its yellow blossoms over our meadows. The Cuckoo flower

has been found in some fields in Monmouthshire in great quantities, with double blossoms, but smaller and not so pretty as the single ones—these, as in all double flowers, do not produce seed, and are consequently increased by the lower leaflets coming in contact with the ground, and throwing out roots. This flower is seldom mentioned by the poets, although it gives a bright appearance to our meadows at this season when flowers are few, and is a great favorite with children, who call them milk-maids, and run about the meadows gathering their little hands full of the lively blossoms.

“Bright flower! how gladly do we welcome thee?
Attendant on the early steps of Spring,
Who in her train doth ever kindly bring
Thousands of blooming guests; around we see
The primrose and the pale anemone,
In every wild wood or shady grove;
And the golden celandine, as we rove
Through verdant meadows, or upon the lea;

“With many other gifts from Flora’s hand,
Whose perfect skill is seen in simplest flower
That blooms in wilds unknown or lady’s bower,
Deck hill and dale of this our native land—
We welcome thee, O! cheerful Cuckoo-flower,
As on the streamlet’s brink we see thee stand.”

Although the situation set down for this plant is the moist meadow, yet it is often found growing in those moderately dry, but then the flowers are

generally smaller : it delights in moisture, and is often seen on the banks of rivulets with very large blossoms.

The narrow-leaved Bitter Cress (*Cardamine impatiens*) is rather rare ; the flowers are small and white, and the leaves cut into narrow segments. It is found in Monmouthshire, Derbyshire, Westmoreland and Cumberland. It has been discovered that some garden plants, if allowed to remain in the same situation for several years die away, and the cause assigned being that such roots as the Pansy and Larkspur throw off an abundant quantity of excrementitious discharge, which saturates the soil, and renders it unfit for the growth of plants of the same species ; and such plants are therefore possessed with the property of having their seed pods of a hard and nearly horny substance, which open with a spring, and throw their seeds to a distance ; such is the case with this flower, which generally grows on rocks and rocky situations ; it throws its ripe seed to a considerable distance on being touched, as if it were endowed with vitality, and had a care for its own embryo progeny.

THE COMMON WART CRESS.

(*Corónopus Rué'ii.*)

The common Wart Cress, or Swine's Cress, is

an insignificant plant, and is merely noticed here as a type of the order to which it belongs, and not for any beauty or associations connected with it; it usually roots itself among gravel in waste places, and is seldom observed by the passer-by. It is included in the same class as the last, but the order is different in consequence of its having a short seed-pod or pouch, and therefore belonging to the order *siliculosa*. These plants also belong to the important natural order *Cruciferæ*, many of which are edible, as the water cress (*Nasturtium officinale*); Turnip (*Brassica Rapa*), and Horse-radish, (*Cochléaria Armorácia*). The whole family contains an essential oil which renders them stimulating, and they are anti-scorbutic.

THE COMMON ASH.

(*Fraxinus excelsior*)

Class, Diandria. Order, Monogynia. Nat. Ord. Jasmineæ.

This common tree of our woods and brakes is used for a variety of purposes, and the wood is used principally by the cooper and the turner. In addition to its useful properties, it possesses others that render it a favourite with landscape gardeners, on account of its light and elegant form when

properly disposed ; breaking the monotonous outline of forest scenery. It has been called "the Venus of the forest," and for its grace and beauty well deserves the name. The valuable qualities of the timber of the ash consists in its great toughness and elasticity. Its leaves make their appearance later in spring than other trees, and from their tender structure are soon stripped by the breezes of autumn. The Ash is not particularly noticed for reaching a great size or retaining its beauty in old age, although at Earlsmill, near the seat of the Earl of Moray, there is mentioned an ash which measures more than seventeen feet in girth at three feet from the ground, and much greater if taken below. There is a hole at the root of it large enough to admit one man at a time, and on creeping into it the cavity is found large enough to allow three people to stand upright in it at the same time ; and until an accident happened to the head of this venerable tree in 1824, its beautiful appearance was equal to its age. It is in mountain scenery that the ash appears to peculiar advantage, waving its slender branches over some precipice which just affords it soil sufficient for its footing, or springing between crevices of rock, a happy emblem of the hardy spirit which will not be subdued by fortune's scantiness.

THE WILD HYACINTH, OR BLUE BELL.

(Hyacinthus non-scriptus).

Class, Hexandria. Order, Monogynia. N. O. Asphodeleæ.

This pretty flower, with "Bells of azure blue," derives its name from the beautiful youth, Hyacinthus, who, being killed by Apollo, was changed by him into a plant, whose foliage bore in the dark streaks the initials of his name; our only British species having no mark or figure on the leaf was hence called non-scriptus.

"Apollo with unwitting hand,
 Whilome did stay his dearly loved mate,
 Young Hyacinth, the pride of Spartan land,
 But then transformed him to a purple flower."

The Greeks annually kept a festival in the month of Hecatombeon, at Amyclæ, in honour of Hyacinthus: it lasted three days, on the first of which was mourning, woe, and lamentation; but on the second and third they offered sacrifices, exhibited sights, enjoyed themselves, and treated their friends at festivals, and danced and sung hymns to Apollo.

The graceful blossoms of the Hyacinth droop in profusion in woods and brakes. The poet in his invitation says—

“Child of the Spring, thou charming flower,
No longer in confinement lie,
Arise to light, thy form discover,
Rival the azure of the sky.

“The rains are gone, the storms are o’er
Winter retires to make thee way,
Come then, thou sweetly blooming flower
Come, lovely stranger, come away.

“The sun is dress’d in beaming smiles,
To give thy beauties to the day,
Young zephyrs wait with gentlest gales
To fan thy bosom as they play.”

This flower is a lover of the shade, and in our woods and secluded vales, or on the grassy margin of our rivulets it is seen in perfection, as Elliott writes,

“Shade loving Hyacinth! thou com’st again,
And thy rich odours seem to swell the flow
Of the lark’s song, the redbreast’s lonely strain;
And the stream’s tune, best sung where wild flow-
ers blow,
And ever sweetest where the sweetest grow.”

The leaves of this plant are long and narrow, and the stem which bears a raceme of drooping blue blossoms, is round and sometimes a foot in length, the blossoms are bell-shaped, with the points of the petals reflected; which curling of the cup caused Milton to observe,—

“And Hyacinthine locks
Round his parted forelock manly hung clustering.”

and another poet says—

“Hyacinth handsome with his clustering locks.”

Percival speaks of the Hyacinth as a symbol of sorrow and melancholy :—

“A Hyacinth lifted its purple bell
From the slender leaves around it;
It curved its cup in a flowing swell,
And a starry circle crown'd it ;
The deep blue tincture that robed it seemed
The gloomiest garb of sorrow,
As if on its eye no brightness beamed,
And it never in clearer moments dreamed
Of a fair and calm to-morrow.”

If it has the appearance of melancholy and gloom, as the poet says it has, it is rendered more so from the shady situations in which it delights. Another poet in alluding to it says,

“Then mark
The melancholy Hyacinth that weeps
All night, and never lifts an eye all day :”

but in a light and bright situation it looks full of beauty and cheerfulness, and whilst writing, a ramble through the woods is recalled to our memory where we alighted on an open spot that appeared like fairy ground ; it was a tract of about twenty yards in extent, and so thickly strewn with flowers that the earth was not perceptible beneath them ; the colours of the flowers that grew there were so beautiful and so finely contrasted, that

they could not fail to attract the attention of every passer-by, for in the group the bright red blossoms of the wood Lychnis grew in clusters accompanied by the brilliant white stars of the greater Stitchwort (*Stellaria holostea*) with their yellow anthers, and the drooping blossoms of the Bluebell, forming a carpet of flowers, whilst in the back-ground waved the yellow blossoms of the common Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*); and when could a garden display a choicer variety of colours than grew in such abundance on this wild spot.

THE WHITE POPLAR.

(*Populus alba*).

Class, Diœcia. Order, Decandria. N. O. Amentacææ.

This plant is now in bloom. “The poplar that with silver lines its leaves,” is a tree of large growth, with a rough bark, and round heart-shaped leaves, toothed, and shining above, and very white beneath. The late Mr. Loudon, in his work on trees and shrubs, says, according to the ancient mythology the white poplar “was consecrated to Hercules, because he destroyed Cacus in a cavern of Mount Aventine, which was covered with these trees; and in the moment of triumph, bound his brow with a branch in token of his victory. When he descended to the in-

fernal regions, he also returned with a wreath of white poplar round his head." It was this, says the fable, that made the leaves of the colour they now are. The perspiration from the hero's brow made the inner part of the leaf white, while the smoke of the lower regions turned the upper surface of the leaves almost black. Persons sacrificing to Hercules were always crowned with branches of this tree: and all who had gloriously conquered their enemies in battle, wore garlands of it in imitation of Hercules. In the sentiment of Flowers it is said the ancients consecrated the white poplar to time, because the leaves are generally in motion, and being of a blackish green on one side, with a thick white cotton on the other, these were supposed to indicate the alternative of day and night. The Aspen (*Populus tremula*), that quivers with the least breath of air, is the most interesting species, and when growing in a favorable situation, is a tall and elegant tree, and

"The wind full of wantonness woos like a lover

The young aspen trees till they tremble all over."

In the highlands of Scotland it is asserted to be the tree from which the wood was taken to form the cross of Christ, and for this reason its leaves are never at rest.—A young lady, named Jewsbury, has written the following lines relative to this tree:—

"I would not be

A leaf on yonder Aspen tree!

In every fickle breeze to play,
Wildly, weakly, idly, gay,
So feebly framed, so lightly hung,
By the wing of an insect stirred and swung;
Thrilling e'en to a redbreast's note,
Drooping if only a light mist float,
Brightened and dimmed like a varying glass,
As shadow or sunbeam chance to pass :—

“I would not be
A leaf on yonder Aspen tree.
It is not because the Autumn sere
Would change my merry guise and cheer—
That soon, full soon, nor leaf, nor stem,
Sunlight would gladden, or dew-drop gem,
That I with my fellows, must fall to the earth,
Forgotten our beauty and breezy mirth,
Or else on the bough where all had grown,
Must linger on, and linger alone;
Might life be an endless summer's day,
And I be for ever green and gay,
I would not be, I would not be
A leaf on yonder Aspen tree!
Proudly spoken, heart of mine,
Yet weakness and change perchance are thine,
More, and darker, and sadder to see
Than befall the leaves of yonder tree!
What if they flutter—thy life is a dance!
Or toy with the sunbeam—they live in his glance;
To bird, breeze, and insect, rustle and thrill,
Never the same, never mute, never still,—
Emblems of all that is fickle and gay,
But leaves in their birth, but leaves in decay—
Chide them not—heed them not—spirit, away;
Into thyself, to thine own hidden shrine,
What there dost thou worship? what deem'st thou
divine?

Thy hopes—are they stedfast, and holy and high?
Are they built on a rock? are they raised to the sky?
Thy deep secret yearnings—oh, whither point they,
To the triumphs of earth, to the toys of a day?—
Thy friendships and feelings,—doth impulse prevail
To make them, and mar them, as wind swells the
sail?—

Thy life's ruling passion—thy being's first aim—
What are they? and yield they contentment or
shame?

Spirit, proud spirit, ponder thy state,
If thine the leaf's lightness, not thine the leaf's fate.
It may flutter, and glisten, and wither, and die,
And heed not our pity, and ask not our sigh:
But for thee, the immortal, no winter may throw
Eternal repose on thy joys, or thy woe;
Thou must live—live for ever—in glory or gloom—
Beyond the world's precincts—beyond the dark
tomb;

Look to thyself, then, ere past is Hope's reign,
And looking and longing alike are in vain;
Lest thou deem it a bliss to have been or to be,
But a fluttering leaf on yon aspen tree."

The Black Poplar (*Populus nigra*) is also celebrated in fable: Ovid says, when Phaëton borrowed the chariot horses of the sun, and by his careless driving set half the world on fire, he was hurled from the chariot by Jupiter into the Po, where he was drowned; and his sisters, the Heliades, wandering on the banks of the river, were changed into trees, supposed by some writers to be poplars." The evidence in favor of the poplar consists in there being abundance of black pop-

lars on the banks of the Po: in the poplar, as with most species of aquatic trees, being so surcharged with moisture, as to have it exuded through the pores of the leaves, which may thus literally be said to weep; and there being no tree on which the sun shines more brightly than on the black poplar, thus still showing gleams of parental affection to the only memorial left of the unhappy son whom his fondness had contributed to destroy.

THE LESSER PERIWINKLE.

(*Vinca minor.*)

Class, Pentandria. Order, Monogynia. N. O. Apocynæ.

This pretty plant trails in some of the woods and banks in England: a great quantity may be seen in an extensive wood in Monmouthshire, called Wentwood, where plants with white as well as blue blossoms are growing together in great abundance—where

“Through primrose tufts in that sweet bower,
The Periwinkle trails its wreaths.”

It is also found wild in Devon. The leaves are evergreen, shining, and smooth; they stand opposite on the stalk, the stems are procumbent, the

flowers stalked, and the calyx segments are lance-shaped. It is a perennial plant, and in moist situations, in which it delights, the leaves and stems form a complete matting. When cultivated it varies little from the wild state.

“Where captivates the sky-blue periwinkle.”

It is often grown in gardens, and is a very nice trailing plant for rock work, and on rough spots under the drip of trees where it will flourish better than any other plant. The Periwinkle is the emblem of tender recollections.—

“Emblems we are, of joy or woe,
And tender recollection’s glow
Inspired by our name;
Our glossy leaves with flowers entwined
Were made the bridal robe to bind
In days of ancient fame.

“And we are also flowers of death,
The mourning mother weaves a wreath
Of our dark shining sprays;
She twines it round the lovely head,
Ere in the cold and silent bed
Her child she sadly lays.

“Whene’er our blossomed stars you view,
Bethink you of life’s changing hue,
How joy and sorrow blend;
That though thy cup may now flow o’er
Anguish may wring the heart before
Life’s fitful day shall end.”

We have already spoken of the shady dell where violets love to dwell, and the plains where daisies deck the sod, of brakes and banks where the pale and delicate primrose puts forth its bloom, and we now turn to the wood, and there the periwinkle, accompanied by the anemone, stretches its long parterre of verdure and flowers, as mutual foils to each other's charms ; the leaves of the former are hard and glossy, and the plant is deeply rooted in the soil, which it adorns on all sides with its flexible shoots, and covers it with flowers which seem to reflect and imitate the azure of the sky, thus our first affections, so warm, pure and artless, they appear to have a celestial origin, they mark our days with a moment's happiness, and to them we owe our sweetest recollection.

“ A memory of the past—a flower I love,
Not for itself—but that its name is linked
With names I love ; and that 'twas once to me
An omen of success ; when smilingly
Young Friendship said he would be ever so.”

The Greater Periwinkle (*Vinca major*) bears much larger leaves and blossoms, and is often found growing in the vicinity of old castles and monasteries, which would lead us to imagine that it was in former days much cultivated.

From the low Periwinkle, trailing among the underwood of the forest, we look up to the king of forest trees, the noble oak.

THE BRITISH OAK.

(Quercus Robur.)

Class, Monœcia. Order, Hexandria. Nat. Ord.
Amentaceæ.

The general appearance of the oak is so noble and majestic as to warrant the words of Douglas,

“This is the place, the centre of the grove,
Here stands the oak, the monarch of the wood.”

There are two distinct species of oak, natives of this country, which greatly resemble each other in general appearance, but may readily be distinguished when once their specific characters have been pointed out. Every one knows an oak tree when he sees it, but few persons, except botanists, know one kind from another, or are aware that we have more than one species belonging to Britain. The British Oak bears its fruit on a stalk, but its leaves grow close to the stem, with a very short footstalk. In the other species the sessile fruited Oak (*Quercus sessiliflora*) these two characteristics are precisely opposite, the leaves grow on long footstalks, while the acorns are sessile, or with a very short peduncle or footstalk. The timber of this species is said to be much inferior to the last, but an eminent modern author has stated that it is the Quer-

cus sessiliflora which yields the best timber for ship-building. The characters pointed out, will for the most part, be found pretty constant, although it may be remarked that the oak is a tree subject to great variations. The British Oak, for instance, sometimes bears its fruit almost close to the stem, and sometimes the sessile fruited bears the acorns on a short foot-stalk; the leaves too frequently vary in the length of the foot-stalk, but in a general way the above distinctions readily point out the difference. The following lines were by Cowper addressed to the hollow trunk of a gigantic oak:—

“Thou wert a bauble once, a cup and ball
Which babes might play with; and the thievish jay
Seeking her food, with ease might have purloined
The auburn nut that held thee, swallowing down
Thy yet close folded latitude of boughs,
And all thy embryo vastness at a gulp,
Time made thee what thou wert—king of the woods!
And time hath made thee what thou art—a cave
For owls to roost in!—Once thy spreading boughs
O’erhung the campaign, and the numerous flock
That graz’d it stood beneath that ample cope
Uncrowded, yet safe sheltered from the storm.”

Scott calls it the “Warrior Oak.” Beauty of a sublime character, united with strength, is characteristic of the oak, which, like the lion among animals, is the unquestionable “king of the forest.”

“————— The Oak
Once formed man’s house and oracle, its fruit

His food. Now the patriot monarch leaves
A throne of centuries, leaves the forest
Hills, o'er mountain waves to rule triumphant
Great father of ships."

LEGENDE.

An Oak in Amphill Park, Bedfordshire, measures more than forty feet at the base. It is hollow, and the age of the tree must be very great, but the loss of the concentric circles, by which the age of a tree can be ascertained, prevents its being correctly determined.—A plate is affixed to it bearing the following inscription :—

"Majestic tree, whose wrinkled form hath stood
Age after age, the patriarch of the wood!
Thou who hast seen a thousand springs unfold
Their ravell'd buds, and dip their flowers in gold :
Ten thousand times yon moon relight her horn,
And that bright star of evening gild the morn :—
Gigantic oak! thy hoary head sublime
Erewhile must perish in the wrecks of time.
Should round thy head innocuous lightnings shoot,
And no fierce whirlwind shake thy stedfast root,
Yet shalt thou fall ; thy leafy tresses fade,
And those bare scattered antlers strew the glade :
Arm after arm shall leave thy mouldering bust,
And thy firm fibres crumble into dust.
The muse alone shall consecrate thy name,
And by her powerful art prolong thy fame ;
Green shall thy leaves extend, thy branches play,
And bloom for ever in th' immortal clay."

Oaks among forest trees have ever stood conspicuously pre-eminent ; none have been so un-

interruptedly—so universally esteemed, perhaps few have been valued from such different causes. In all ages they have been admired, and in some they have been adored. It was held sacred by the Greeks and Romans, as well as by the Britons and the Gauls, but to them its importance was little known ; it is now more valued and far more justly prized than when it was the fear of the superstitious as their oracle, or the resort of the hungry as their food. Cowley apostrophizing the Oak, refers to this patriarchal food.—

“ Heroes on earth once lived, men good and great,
Acorns their food—thus fed they flourished,
And equalled in their age the long-lived oak.
Happy that race of men, most sacred tree,
Thy shade their living house, that house itself
Shed daily food to feed its peaceful lord.”

Pelasgus, who taught some of the wandering tribes of Greece to build huts and eat acorns, “ received divine honours as his meed.” In most countries where they grow, acorns formed more or less the early diet of mankind, and “ fed alike the vassal and his lord.”

The excrescences we often see on the leaves of the oak are produced by insects. These productions are of various sizes, form, and consistence, some being spongy, as the oak apple, and others extremely hard, like nutgalls.

We often behold a blasted oak standing alone in the meadow, with its bare and withered arms

outstretched, the wreck of former greatness. Barton on such an object has composed the following :—

“Hast thou seen, in winter’s stormiest sky,
The trunk of a blighted oak,
Not dead, but sinking in slow decay,
Beneath time’s resistless stroke.
Round which a luxurious ivy had grown,
And wreath’d it in verdure no longer its own.

“Perchance thou hast seen this sight—and then,
As I at thy years might do,
Pass’d carelessly by, nor turned again
That scathed wreck to view ;
But now I can draw from that perishing tree
Thoughts which are soothing and dear to me.”

The worship of the Druids was usually performed under an oak, and a heap of stones or cairn was erected on which the sacred fire was kindled. Criminals were tried beneath an oak tree; the judge and jury being seated under its shade, and the prisoner placed in a circle made by the chief Druid’s wand. The Saxons held their national meetings under an oak; and the celebrated conference between the Saxons and the Britons, after the invasion of the former, was held under the oaks of Dartmoor. The beautiful appearance of this stately tree, whose historical and poetic associations are very numerous, and Charles I. and Shakspeare being ever connected with it, is thus aptly described by Cromwell :—

"Lo, where the oak, in stately pride, that rears
Its branches, strengthen'd by upholding years,
Bears groaningly the blast, that braves its power."

THE SPANISH CHESTNUT.

(*Castanea vulgaris.*)

Class, Monoecia. Order, Polyandria. Nat. Ord.,
Amentaceæ.

The Chestnut is another noble tree; and on viewing the one at Totsworth, in Gloucestershire, belonging to Lord Ducie, which is supposed to have been a boundary tree in King John's reign, Cowley wrote the following lines:—

"Hail! old patrician, tree so great, so good!
Hail! ye plebeian underwood!
Where the poetic birds rejoice,
And for their quiet nests and plenteous food,
Pay with their grateful voice.

"Here nature does a house for me erect,
Nature, the wisest architect;
Who those fond artists doth despise,
That can the fair and living tree neglect,
Yet the dead timber prize.

"Here let me, careless and unthoughtful, lying,
Hear the soft sounds above me flying
With all the wanton boughs' dispute,
And the more tuneful birds to both relying,
Nor be myself, too, mute."

The leaves of the Chestnut are long lance-shaped, deeply serrated (saw-like margins); the male flower has a corolla with five petals, and the stamens number from ten to twenty; the calyx of the female is about five-leaved, and covered with soft spines. This tree is generally believed to be a native of the British Isles, from the circumstance of its timber having been found forming the beams of many old buildings. It is not so much cultivated in England as in former years. The fruit is generally given to swine in England, but is used as an article of food in the south of Europe, and in some countries it is a delicacy for princes. The wood affords excellent stakes for palisades and props for vines and hops.

THE COMMON CHICKWEED.

(*Stellaria media.*)

Class, Decandria. Order, Digynia. Nat. Ord.,
Caryophyllææ.

This grows too plentiful in gardens, where its slender fibrous root is difficult to eradicate: it bears a white flower, and small birds are very fond of the seeds. The species most to be admired is the Greater Stitchwort (*Stellaria holostea*); the blossoms are abundant, with pure white, veined, and deeply notched petals, which contrasted

with the ten prominent yellow stamens, look exceedingly gay and pretty in our woods and hedge rows. It grows from one to two feet high, if supported by the hedge; the stems are very brittle, and the leaves are narrow spear-shaped. It takes its name from Stella (a star), from the shape of the corolla. There are several other species very common, and amongst the number is the Grassy Stitchwort (*S. graminea*), growing in bushy places, and the Bog Stitchwort (*S. uliginosa*), abundant in ditches and rivulets. The next flower that comes under our observation is the

COMMON HONEYSUCKLE.

(*Lonicera Periclymenum*.)

Class, Pentandria. Order, Monogynia. Nat. Ord.,
Caprifoliaceæ.

This universal favorite twining shrub decorates the hedges in most parts of England, and is well known for the delicious odour of its flowers, which are of a yellowish or white colour, with red streaks. We seldom take a country walk at this season without observing this lovely flower running on the tops of the hedges, and delighting our senses with its delightful perfume, which is much stronger after a shower. The Common Honeysuckle, or

Woodbine, seems to be especially cultivated by peasants, being so often seen trained round the entrances to their cottages, and about their casements, intermixed with the China Rose.

“See the Honeysuckle twine
Round his casement ;—’tis a shrine
Where the heart doth incense give,
And the pure affections live.”

In its wild state it is not confined to the hedge rows, but in the tangled wood it is found twining around the adjoining branches, and even springing from the clefts of rocks, and

“ — It loves to crawl
Up the low crag and ruin’d wall.”

Milton in his well-known couplet—

“Through the sweetbriar or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine,”

seems to give it the name of “eglantine,” the old name for the sweetbriar ; though in *Comus* he speaks of it as the “flaunting Honeysuckle.” It is commonly called “Woodbine,” as *Mason* beautifully describes it—

“The Woodbine wild,
That loves to hang on barren boughs
Her wreath of remote flowery perfume.”

This elegant climbing shrub we sometimes see lovingly entwining the gnarled trunk of an aged

oak with its supple and delicate arms; such an object we once beheld, and

“How rich the prize, how gay the flower,
Sweeter than all which bloom in bower,
We deemed this woodbine wild;
We sought it long, and sought in vain,
Now finding it, we felt again
The joy which as a child,
Had filled our breast with glad delight,
Had pleased the sense of smell and sight,
When flowers wild we found;
We plucked the beauty from its throne—
The beauty there we’d found alone,
Of all the country round.”

It has a light and negligent air, and trained against our cottages,

“Copious of flowers, the woodbine pale and wan,
But well compensating her sickly looks
With never changing odours, early and late,”

at once delights the eye and gratifies the smell by the exquisite fragrance of its blossoms, whilst it confers on those dwellings a character of cheerfulness unknown to most other countries. Who has not noticed

“The honeysuckle on the sunny side,
Hanging round the lattices its fragrant trumpets.”

The Honeysuckle is the emblem of “generous and devoted affection,” such as is described by Moore in the following lines:—

“Oh ! let me only breathe the air,
That blessed air that’s breathed by thee,
And whether on its wings it bear
Healing or death, ’tis sweet to me !
There—drink my tears while yet they fall,
Would that my bosom’s blood were balm,
And well thou know’st I’d shed it all
To give thy brow one minute’s calm.”

The flowers of the honeysuckle grow at the extremity of the branches that spring from the main shoot ; the blossom is about an inch and a half in length, and formed like a tube, gradually widening towards the extremity, one side of which curls backwards with the outer edge cut into four lobes. We have also two other species growing wild. The Pale Perfoliate Honeysuckle (*Lonicera Coriifolium*) the flowers of which are terminal, and contain six blossoms in each cluster, under which is a leaf perforated by the stem. It is found growing in thickets but not very frequent. The other species is the upright Honeysuckle (*L. Xylosteum*) which grows erect, four or five feet high, and the flower-stalks bearing only two cream-colour or reddish blossoms, and is a rare plant growing in thickets.

THE CROSS-WORT BEDSTRAW.

(Galium cruciatum.)

Class, Tetrandria. Order, Monogynia. Nat. Ord.
Rubiaceæ.

A number of Bedstraws are now in bloom, most of which bear white blossoms. The above mentioned species bears a yellow bloom, and is by some called the "Honey plant," from the strong scent of honey it gives if picked when the sun is shining upon it, and also from its having a sticky or clammy feel. The stem is four-sided, with four leaves in a whorl on the stem; the flowers are situated in the axil of the leaf, each blossom having four petals and four stamens. The White Water Bedstraw (*Galium palustre*) grows about a foot and a half high in moist places, and bears a profusion of small white blossoms; the stem is brittle, and square, and the leaves are oblong, lance-shaped, and grow in whorls round the stem. The Yellow Bedstraw, (*G. verum*) grows in rocky places, and the smooth Heath Bedstraw, (*G. saxatile*), a small species bearing white blossoms, blooms in great quantities on our waste lands and mountains.

"On the desolate heath, all unnoted, unknown,
I've sprung up but a mean little flower,

Yet on me are the rays of the day ruler thrown,
And mine is the wealth of the shower.

“I feel the pure breeze as it sweeps o’er the ground,
Bringing health to leaf, blossom, and stem ;
And the soft dews of evening encircle me round
With full many a crystal-like gem.

“Let me whisper it then both to simple and sage,
That I am (though so lowly my lot),
A legible letter in that beautiful page,
Which can hold neither error nor blot.”

Most of the forest trees bloom this month, and upwards of thirty species of the Willow ; and the following flowers are in blossom :—*Pasque flower Anemone* (*Anemone Pulsatilla*), in chalky pastures ; *Blue mountain Anemone* (*Anemone Apennina*), in Bedfordshire, Essex, Harrow ; *Solid rooted Corydalis* (*Corydalis solida*), rare—thickets, Hampshire, Birmingham ; *Early Winter Cress* (*Barbarea præcox*), waste places ; *Spring Vetch* (*Vicia lathyroides*), dry pastures ; *Vernal water Starwort* (*Callitriche verna*), ditches and streams ; *Purple mountain Saxifrage* (*Saxifraga oppositifolia*), moist alpine rocks ; *Wild beaked Parsley* (*Anthriscus sylvestris*), hedge banks ; *Common Corn Salad* (*Fedia olitoria*), banks in light soil ; *Smooth narrow fruited Do.* (*Fedia dentata*), corn fields ; *Spring Gentian* (*Gentiana verna*), rare, Alpine pastures ; *Greater toothwort* (*Lathræa squamaria*), apparently parasitic on ha-

zels and elms; *Yellow Fig wort* (*Scrophularia vernalis*), road sides and waste places; *Yellow Bugle* (*Ajuga Chamæpitys*), sandy ground, Kent, Surrey; *Sowbread* (*Cyclamen hederifolium*), rare, banks, Suffolk, Kent; *Wild Tulip* (*Tulipa sylvestris*) (chalk pits, Norfolk, Suffolk, Herts, Middlesex; *Vernal Squill* (*Scilla verna*), coasts west and north of England; *Field Wood Rush* (*Luzula campestris*), dry pastures; *Broad-leaved Wood Rush* (*L. pilosa*), woods; *Spider Ophrys* (*Ophrys aranifera*), chalk pastures, Kent; *Pale Narcissus* (*Narcissus biflorus*), sandy fields, Kent and Herts; *Blue Moor Grass* (*Sesleria coerulea*), mountains north of England.

MAY.

“Behold the young, the rosy spring,
Gives to the breeze her scented wing;
While virgin Graces, warm with May,
Fling graces o’er her dewy way.
The murmuring billows of the deep
Have languished into silent sleep,
And mark ! the flitting sea-birds lave
Their plumes in the reflecting wave;
While cranes from hoary winter fly,
To flutter in a kinder sky.
Now the genial star of day
Dissolves the murky clouds away;
And cultured field, and winding stream
Are freshly glittering in the beam :
Now the earth prolific swells,
With leafy buds and flowery bells.”

MAY is the month of out-door rejoicing, and we all feel inspired by the gay face of nature. The “merry month of May” was the second in the old Alban calendar, and third in that of Romulus, and fifth, the place it now holds, in the one instituted by Numa Pompilius. Our Saxon forefathers termed it *Tri Milki*, because at that season they began to milk their kine three times a day.

“Hail to thee, May, thou radiant month of flowers.”

It is termed the "Queen of the year:" hill, and wood, and vale contribute to her attire, her hair is "pranked with daisies," "the Pansy freckled with black," is pressed into her bosom, where "Heart's-ease" ever is, and her lap is filled with the "yellow Cowslip and the pale Primrose;" her robe is of emeralds sprinkled with the gold and silver spangles of the butter-cup and daisy.

"Born in yon blaze of orient sky,
Sweet May! thy radiant form unfold,
Unclose thy blue voluptuous eye,
And wave thy shadowy locks of gold.

"For thee, the fragrant zephyrs blow,
For thee, descends the sunny shower,
The rills in softer murmurs flow,
And brighter blossoms gem the bower.

"Light graces deck'd in flowery wreaths,
And tiptoe joys their hands combine;
And love his sweet contagion breathes,
And laughing, dances round thy shrine."

"Warm with new life, the glittering throng,
On quivering fin, and rustling wing,
Delighted join their votive song,
And hail thee, "Goddess of the Spring."

DARWIN.

May was anciently represented as a beautiful youth clothed in robes of white and green, embroidered with daffodils and hawthorn blossoms, his head covered with white and damask roses,

holding a lute in one hand and on the other a nightingale. Spenser sings,

“Then came fair May, the fairest maid on ground,
Deck'd all with dainties of her season's pride,
And throwing flowers out of her lap around ;
Upon her brethren's shoulders she did ride,
The twins of Leda ; which on either side
Supported her, like to their sovereign Queen,
Lord ! how all creatures laughed when her they spied,
And leap'd and danc'd as they had ravish'd been,
And cupid's self about her fluttered all in green.”

There is an allusion in the above stanzas to Castor and Pollux, or Gemini, into which the sun enters on the twentieth of May.

The foot of May falls on the delicate blossoms of the early grasses. A thousand voices from hedge, and thicket, and tree, sing her welcome, each varied in its note, but all uniting in one sweet song, the song of happiness and love, for the blest mother of the year is come, the universal breast of nature is open to her children.

The poet Clare speaks thus of the arrival of May :

“ When apple trees in blossom are,
And cherries of a silken white,
And king-cups deck the meadows fair,
And daffodils in brooks delight.
When golden wallflowers bloom around,
And purple violets strew the ground,
And lilac 'gins to show her bloom,
We then may say that May is come.

“When happy shepherds tell their tale,
Under the tender leafy tree;
And all adorn the grassy vale,
The mocking cuckoo chanteth free;
And Philomel with liquid throat
Doth pour the welcome warbling note,
That hath been all the winter dumb,
We then may say that May is come,

“When fishes leap in silver stream,
And tender corn is springing high,
And banks are warm with sunny beam,
And twittering swallows cleave the sky,
And forest bees are humming near,
And Cowslips in boys hats appear,
And maids do wear the meadow’s bloom,
We then may say that May is come.”

Many other poets have hailed it as the month of sunshine and flowers, and Clare again in his “Village Minstrel” truly describes the scenes, sports and feelings of rural life. The description of scenery, as well as the expression of natural emotion and generous sentiment in that poem, stamps him as a poet of no ordinary cast;—

“And dear to him the rural sports of May,
When each cot threshold mounts the trailing bough,
And ruddy milkmaids weave their garlands gay
Upon the green to crown the earliest cow.”

In speaking of this smiling month he writes

“O who can tell the sweets of May day’s morn,
To waken rapture in a feeling mind;

When the gilt east unveils her dapple dawn,
 And the gay woodlark has his nest resigned,
 As slow the sun creeps up the hill behind ;
 Morn redd'ning round, and daylight's spotless hue,
 As seemingly with rose and lily lined,
 While all the prospect round beams fair to view,
 Like a sweet opening flower, with its unsullied dew."

Every vegetable is now springing from its cold bed, where it has lain dormant during the bleak months of winter, and has now burst the earth to rear its head to welcome

"May, the month of rosy beauty,
 Month, when pleasure is a duty ;
 Month, of maids that milk the kine,
 Bosom rich and breath divine :
 Month of bees and month of flowers,
 Month of blossom laden bowers ;
 Month of little hands and daisies,
 Lover's love and poets' praises ;
 Oh ! thou merry month complete,
 May, thy very name is sweet ;
 May was *maid* in olden times,
 And is still in Scottish rhymes ;
 May's the blooming hawthorn bough,
 May's the month that's laughing now."

One allusion more, before closing our remarks on this sweet month, which we select from that lofty and majestic writer, Milton.—

"Now the bright morning star, day's harbinger,
 Comes dancing from the east, and leads with her
 The flowery May, who from her green lap throws
 The yellow Cowslip and the pale Primrose.

Hail, beauteous May ! thou dost inspire,
Mirth and youth, and warm desire ;
Woods and groves are of thy dressing,
Hill and dale both boast thy blessing,
Thus we salute thee with our early song
And welcome thee and wish thee long."

Amongst the various blossoms that now bloom
in our meadows there is none that attracts more
attention than the

COWSLIP.

(*Primula veris*).

Class, Pentandria. Order, Monogynia. Nat. Ord.
Primulaceæ.

The country people in some parts of Kent call it "Fairy cup." It probably received the name of Cowslip from its velvety surface resembling a lip, and therefore called by some of the old poets "Lip of Cows." A stalk springs from the centre of the leaves, and spreads off into smaller branches at the top, each bearing a blossom ; the leaves are thick and wrinkled, but a minute description is unnecessary, for few persons are unacquainted with this flower of our pastures.

"Bowling adorers of the gale,
Ye Cowslips delicately pale,
Upraise your loaded stems,

Unfold your cup in splendour, speak !
Who deck'd you with that ruddy streak,
And gilt your golden gems,"

Writes the poet to these simple, but strikingly beautiful blossoms, and Montgomery has not left this sweet flower unnoticed, as we find the following light and pretty lines penned by him to it :—

"Now in my walk, with sweet surprise,
I see the first spring Cowslip rise,
The plant whose pensile flowers
Bend to the earth their beauteous eyes
In sunshine as in showers.

"Low on a mossy bank it grew,
Where lichens purple, red, and blue
Among the verdure crept;
Its yellow ringlets dropping dew,
The breezes lightly swept.

"A bee had nestled on its bloom,
He shook abroad their rich perfume,
Then fled in airy rings ;
His place a butterfly assumes
Glancing his glorious wings.

"O welcome ! as a friend ! I cried,
A friend through many a season tried
And never sought in vain,
When May, with Flora at her side
Is dancing on the plain.

"Sheltered by Nature's graceful hand,
In briary glens, o'er pasture land,

The fairy tribes we meet,
Gay in the milkmaid's path they stand,
They kiss her tripping feet.

"From winter's farm-yard bondage freed,
The cattle bounding o'er the mead,
Where green the herbage grows,
Among the fragrant blossoms feed—
Upon the tufts repose.

"Tossing his forelock o'er his mane,
The foal at rest upon the plain,
Sports with thy flexile stalk,
Yet stoops his little neck in vain
To crop it in his walk.

"Where thick the primrose blossoms play
Lovely and innocent as they,
O'er coppice, lawns, and dells,
In bands the village children stray,
To pluck thy honied bells.

"Whose simple sweets with curious skill,
The frugal cottage dames distil,
Nor envy France the vine,
While many a festal cup they fill,
Of Britain's homely wine."

The Cowslip is very common in many parts of England, and in some counties a sweet and pleasant wine is made from its blossoms, which is slightly narcotic, and considered the most wholesome of home made wines, and an ointment made from the leaves, is used to remove tan and freckles from the complexion. The "palsy wort" was a

name formerly given to this flower, and was of some note as a medicine. The French call it *herbe de la paralysie*. Nightingales are said by some ornithologists, to be only found where cowslips are plentiful.

“ Oh ! fragrant dwellers of the lea,
When first the wild wood rings
With each sound of vernal minstrelsy,
When fresh the green grass springs.

“ What can the blessed spring restore
More gladdening than your charms
Bringing the memory once more
Of lovely fields and farms.

“ Of thickets, breezes, birds and flowers,
Of life's unfolding prime,
Of thoughts as cloudless as the hours,
Of souls without a crime.

“ Oh ! blessed, blessed do ye seem,
For even now I turned
With soul athirst for wood and stream
From streets that glared and burned.

“ From the hot town, where mortal care
His crowded fold doth pen ;
Where stagnates the polluted air
In many a sultry den.

“ And are ye here ? and are ye here ?
Drinking the dew like wine,
Midst living gales and waters dear,
And heaven's unstinted shine.

“ I care not that your little life
Will quickly have run through,
And the sward with summer children rife,
Keep not a trace of you.

“ For again, again, on dewy plain
I trust to see you rise,
When spring renews the wild wood strain
And bluer gleam the skies.

“ Again, again, when many springs
Upon my grave shall shine,
Here shall you speak of vanished things
To living hearts of mine.”

MARY HOWITT.

How often, in our walks at this season, do we behold groups of children scattered about the meadows, covered with cowslips, eagerly running to gather their hands full of the sweet blossoms, and reminding us of those days when we had neither care or anxiety, but like them took a part in the pleasing pastime, and enjoyed an afternoon's holiday in rambling about in quest of the violet and primrose, and in collecting the cowslips to tie up in the form of a ball to toss to each other. The appearance of the Cowslip is an invitation to the young to ramble to the bright green meadows.

On seeing Cowslips, Mrs. Howitt was reminded of the golden days of childhood, and induced to write the following pretty lines ;

“ Nay, tell me not of Austral flowers,
Or purple bells from Persia’s bowers,
The Cowslip of this land of ours,
Is dearer far to me !
This flower in other years I knew !
I know the field wherein it grew
With violets white and violets blue,
Beneath the garden tree.

“ I never see these flowers but they
Send back my memory far away
To years long passed, and many a day
Else perished long ago !
They bring my childhood’s years again,
Our garden fence, I see it plain,
With celandines like golden rain,
Showered on the earth below.

“ A happy child, I leap, I run,
And memories come back one by one,
Like swallows with the summer sun
To their old haunts of joy !
A happy child once more I stand
With my kind sister hand in band,
And hear those tones, so sweet, so bland,
That never brought alloy.”

It is called Paigle in the midland counties, and in some parts of Kent it goes by the name of “ Fairy cup.” Shakspeare, in his “ Midsummer’s Night’s Dream, alludes to this flower, and imagines its fragrance to lie in the dark yellow spots at the mouth of the tube.

“ The Cowslip’s tall her pensioners be,
In these gold coats spots you see ;

Those be rubies, fairy flowers,
In those freckles live their savours,
I must go seek some dew-drops here,
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear."

The Oxlip (*Primula elatior*) is very similar to the Cowslip, and some authors consider it only a variety, whilst others set it down as a distinct species—the flower is larger and of a paler colour than the Cowslip, and the limb of the corolla is flat, instead of concave, as in the latter. It is found in moist woods and thickets and occasionally in those meadows, where

"Unfolding to the breeze of May,
The Cowslip greets the vernal ray;
The topaz and the ruby gem,
Her blossoms simple diadem,
And as the dew-drops gently fall,
They tip with pearls her coronal.

"In princely halls and courts of kings,
Its lustrous ray the diamond flings,
Yet few of those who see its beam,
Amid the torch's dazzling gleam,
As bright as though a meteor shone,
Can call the costly prize their own.

"But gems of every form and hue
Are glittering here in morning dew,
Jewels that all alike may share
As freely as the common air;
No niggard hand, no jealous eye
Protects them from the passer by.

“ Man to his brother shuts his heart,
And science acts a miser’s part ;
But Nature with a liberal hand
Flings wide her stores o’er sea and land,
If gold she gives, not single grains
Are scattered far across the plains :
But lo ! the desert streams are rolled
O’er precious beds of virgin gold.

“ If flowers she offer, wreaths are given
As countless as the stars of heaven !
Or music—’tis no feeble note
She bids along the valleys float,
Ten thousand nameless melodies
In one full chorus swells the breeze.

“ Oh ! art is but a scanty rill,
That genial seasons scarcely fill,
But nature needs no tides’ return
To fill afresh her flowing urn,
She gathers all her rich supplies
Where never fading fountains rise.”

On leaving the meadow with cowslips to the possession of the careless little innocents, we ascend a steep and rocky wood and there our eye is attracted by the pretty foliage of the

MOUNTAIN ASH.

(Pyrus aucuparia.)

Class, Icosandria. Order, Monogynia. Nat. Ord.
Rosaceæ.

This tree grows in mountainous situations where its picturesque appearance imparts a heightened interest to wild and woodland scenery. In the Highlands of Scotland it is frequently seen, and in some of the rocky woods of England. It is very plentiful on the Windcliff rocks in Monmouthshire, and leads us to exclaim with Sir Walter Scott,

“ There I would tell how deep the shade
A thousand mingling branches made ;
There broad the shadows of the oak—
There clung the *rowan* to the rock,
And through the foliage shew'd its head,
With narrow leaves and berries red.”

The Rowan tree (as it is sometimes called), produces a number of cream-coloured blossoms which are sweet smelling, and succeeded by bunches of coral red berries. The foliage is a light and lively green. Gilpin, in speaking of the ornamental appearance of the Mountain Ash, says, “ In the Scottish Highlands it becomes a considerable tree, there, on some rocky mountains covered

with dark pines and waving birch, which casts a solemn gloom over the lake below, a few mountain ashes joined in a clump and mixing with them have a fine effect. In summer, the light green tint of their foliage, and in autumn the glowing berries, which hang clustering on them, contrast beautifully with the deeper green of the pines; and if they are happily blended, and not in too large a proportion, they add some of the most picturesque furniture with which the sides of these rugged mountains are invested, forming as it does one of the characteristics of Scottish scenery."

The Mountain Ash or Rowan is not forgotten by the poets; Grahame thus contrasts the richer offerings of the South with the scanty products of his native country ;

"What though the clustering vine, there hardly tempts
The traveller's hand ; though birds of dazzling plume
Perch on the leaded boughs, Give me the woods,
(Exclaims the banished man,) thy barren woods,
Poor Scotland ; sweeter there the reddening haw,
The sloe, or Rowan's bitter bunch, than here
The purple grape ; dearer the redbreast's note
That mourns the fading year in Scotia's vales,
Than Philomel's, where spring is ever new.
More dear to me the redbreast's sober suit,
So like a withered leaflet, than the glare
Of gaudy wings, that make the iris dim."

The berries are bruised in water, fermented and made into a pleasant drink by the inhabitants of the north of Europe, and an infusion of the ber-

ries is sometimes drunk in Wales, and forms an acid liquor somewhat resembling perry.

This tree had formerly many superstitious virtues and associations connected with it, and was planted near houses to protect them from evil spirits, but it is rapidly losing its mysterious, and supernatural character. It is still supposed in the Highlands to have the power of averting the "evil eye." Sir Walter Scott in the "Monastery," puts the following sentence into the mouth of Dame Glendinning in addressing the monk,—“But I have tied red thread round the bairn's throats, and given ilka ane o' them a riding wand of the rowan tree, forby sewing up a slip of witch elm in their doublets ; and I wish to know of your reverence if there be ony thing mair that a lone woman can do in the matter of ghosts and fairies.” In Britain also, it has long been considered as a sovereign preservative against witchcraft. Lightfoot in his *Flora Scotica*, observes, “It is probable that this tree was held in high esteem by the Druids ; for it may be seen to this day growing more frequently than any other in the neighbourhood of those Druidical circles, so often seen in the north of Britain ; and the superstitious still continue to retain a great veneration for it, which was undoubtedly handed down to them from early antiquity, they believe that a small portion of this tree carried about them will prove a sovereign charm against all the dire effects of enchantment and witchcraft. Their

cattle, also as well as themselves, are preserved by it from evil; for the dairymaid will not forget to drive them with a rod of the rowan tree, which she carefully lays up over the door of the sheal-boothy, or summer house, and drives them home again with the same." In Strathspey, they make on the first of May, a hoop with the wood of this tree, and in the evening and morning cause the sheep and the lambs to pass through it. This superstitious belief was recently or is still prevalent in Wales, as well as the north of England, where it is supposed that

"Rowan tree and red thread
Put the witches from their speed."

It is remarkable that nearly the same belief should exist also in India. "I was amused and surprised," says Bishop Heber, "to find the superstition which in England and Scotland attaches to the rowan tree, here applied to a tree of similar form." Another tree belonging to this country to which legends are attached is the

CRAB APPLE.

(Pyrus Malus.)

Class, Icosandria. Order, Pentagynia. Nat. Ord.
Rosaceæ.

This tree, so singularly connected with the first transgression and fall of man, is distinguished alike in the mythologies of the Greeks, Scandinavians, and Druids. The golden fruits of the Hesperides, which it was one of the labours of Hercules to procure, in spite of the sleepless dragon which guarded them, were believed by the Pagans to be apples. Hercules was worshipped by the Thebans under the name of Melius; and apples were offered at his altars. The origin of this custom was the circumstance of the river Asopus having on one occasion overflowed its banks to such an extent, as to render it impossible to bring a sheep across it which was to be sacrificed to Hercules; when some youths recollecting that an apple bore the same name in Greek, (*mélon*) offered an apple with four sticks stuck in it to resemble legs, as a substitute for a sheep; and after that the Pagans always considered the apple as especially devoted to Hercules. In the Scandinavian Edda we are told, "that the goddess Iduna had the care of apples, which had the power of conferring immor-

talities ; and which were consequently reserved for the gods, who ate of them when they began to feel themselves growing old. The evil spirit, Loke, took away Iduna and her apple tree, and hid them in a forest, where they could not be found by the gods. In consequence of this malicious theft, every thing went wrong in the world. The gods became old and infirm ; and enfeebled both in body and mind ; no longer paid the same attention to the affairs of the earth ; and men having no one to look after them, fell into evil courses, and became the prey of the evil spirit. At length the gods finding matters get worse and worse every day, roused their last remains of vigour, and combined together, forced Loke to restore the tree."

The Druids paid particular reverence to the apple tree, because the mistletoe was supposed to grow only on that tree and on the oak, and also on account of the usefulness of this fruit. In consequence of this feeling, the apple tree was cultivated in Britain from the earliest ages on record ; and Glastonbury was called the apple orchard, from the quantity of apples grown there previous to the time of the Romans. Many old rites and ceremonies are therefore connected with this tree, some of which are practised in the orchard districts even at the present day. Mrs. Bray states "That on Christmas eve the farmers and their men in Devonshire, take a large bowl of cider, with a toast in it, and carrying it in state to the

orchard, salute the apple trees with much ceremony, in order to make them bear well next season. This salutation consists in throwing some of the cider about the roots of the tree, and placing bits of toast on the branches, and then forming themselves into a ring, they, like the bards of old, set up their voices and sing a song, which may be found in Brand's *Popular Antiquities*." The custom of bobbing for apples on All Hollow E'en, and All Saint's Day, which was formerly common in England, and is still practised in some parts of Ireland, has lately become familiar by the masterly painting by M' Clise's, of the sports of All Hollow E'en. A kind of hanging beam, which was continually turning, was suspended from the roof of the room, and an apple placed at one end, and a lighted candle at the other, the parties have their hands tied behind them, and in endeavouring to catch the apple with their mouths, often caught the candle instead. In Warwickshire apples are caught in the same manner, tied to a string, but the lighted candle is dispensed with.

THE COLUMBINE.

(Aquilegia vulgaris).

Class, Polyandria. Order, Pentagynia. Nat. Ord.
Ranunculaceæ.

It is occasionally found on the hedge banks of our green lanes and woods, but oftener about the hedge sides of old orchards. In the English Flora it is set down as a doubtful native plant, and there is every reason to believe it is often the outcast of the cottage garden, although in many parts of Monmouthshire and some other counties, from its frequency it appears undoubtedly wild. The form of the flower is extremely curious, and well deserves a minute examination. It varies in colour, and

“ In pink and purple hues array’d,
Ofttimes indeed in white,
We see within the woodland glade
The Columbine delight.

Some three feet high, with stem erect,
The plant unaided grows ;
And at the summit, now deflect
The strange formed flower blows.”

The flower consists of five coloured sepals and five petals, terminating with a horn-shaped spur

or nectary. It grows from two to three feet high, and has a tuberous root, the leaves on the stem are divided into three leaflets, and stand on short footstalks ; the root leaves are cut into three leaflets, which are again cut into three divisions. In the Language of Flowers it is placed as the emblem of Folly.

“ Bring lilies for a maiden’s grave,
Roses to deck the bride,
Tulips for all who love through life
In brave attire to ride ;
Bring each for each, in bower and hall,
But cull the Columbines for all.

“ The Columbine ? full many a flower
Hath hues more clear and bright,
Altho’ she doth in purple go,
In crimson, pink, and white.
Why, when so many fairer shine,
Why choose the homely columbine ?

“ Examine well each flow’ret’s form,—
Read ye not something more
Than curl of petal—depth of tint ?
Saw ye ne’er aught before
That claims a fancied semblance there
Amid those modelled leaves so fair ?

Know ye the cap which Folly wears
In ancient masques and plays ?
Does not the Columbine recall
That toy of olden days ?
And is not folly reigning now,
O’er many a wisdom written brow ?

" 'Tis Folly's flower, that homely one,
That universal guest,
Makes every garden but a type
Of every human breast;
For though ye tend both mind and bower,
There's still a nook for Folly's flower.

" Then gather roses for the bride,
Twine them in her bright hair,
But, ere the wreath be done, oh ! let
The Columbine be there,
For rest ye sure that follies dwell
In many a heart that loveth well.

" Gather ye laurels for the brow
Of every prince of song !
For all to whom philosophy
And wisdom do belong ;
But ne'er forget to intertwine
A flower or two of Columbine.

" Forget it not ; for even they
The oracles of earth,
'Mid all their wealth of golden thoughts
Their wisdom, and their worth,
Sometimes play pranks beneath the sky
Would scarce become even such as I !

" Weave ye an armful of the plant,
Choosing the darkest flowers,
With that red, blood dipped wreath ye bring
The devastating powers
Of warrior, conqueror, or chief ;
Oh, twine that full of Folly's leaf."

Withering, in speaking of the Columbine says,

“ the elongated and curved nectary seems to bid defiance to the entrance of the bee in search of the hidden treasure ; but the admirable ingenuity of the insect is not to be defeated ; for, on ascertaining the impracticability of effecting his usual admission, he, with his proboscis actually perforates the blossom near the depôt of the honey, and thus extracts the latent sweets. The plant is named from *Aquila*, an *eagle*, whose claws the nectaries resemble.

THE HEARTSEASE,

(*Viola tricolor*),

Is in bloom nearly the whole summer, and varies from local circumstances considerably, both in size and colour. It is sometimes purple, at other times yellow with purple stripes, but generally all its petals are of a sulphur colour. It is shaped like the garden pansy, and is easily distinguished from the other species of violet. It is a flower that is known by a variety of names, and among the most familiar are pansy, heartsease, three monks under a hood, herb Trinity, and love-idleness. The flower is connected with many of our associations, and a poet in addressing it says

“ I used to love thee simple flower,
To love thee dearly when a boy ;
For thou didst seem in childhood's hour,
The smiling type of childhood's joy.

"But now thou only work'st my grief,
By waking thoughts of pleasure fled,
Give me, give me the withered leaf
That falls on autumn's bosom dead.

"For that ne'er tells of what has been,
But warns me what I soon shall be ;
It looks not back on pleasure's scene,
But points unto futurity.

"I love thee not thou simple flower,
For thou art gay and I am lone ;
Thy beauty died with childhood's hour,
The Heartsease from my path is flown."

The French called it Pansees, "thought," whence the English name, Pansy. "There's pansies," says Ophelia to Hamlet, "that's for thought,"—and

"Are not pansies emblems meet for thought ?
The pure, the chequer'd—gay and deeply turn !
A line for every mood the bright things wear
In their soft velvet coats."

These flowers have been much cultivated of late years, and by propagation have increased in size, but unless the soil about their roots is often changed, they gradually decrease. A very dark purple variety is frequently found in cultivated grounds in a wild state.

"In gardens oft a beauteous flower there grows,
By vulgar eyes unnotic'd and unseen,

In sweet security it humbly blows,
And rests its purple head to deck the green.

“ This flower, as nature’s poet sweetly sings,
Was once milk white, and Heartsease was its name,
Till wanton Cupid pois’d his rosy wings,
A vestal’s sacred bosom to inflame.

“ With treacherous aim the god his arrow drew,
Which she with icy coldness did repel;
Rebounding thence with feathery speed it flew,
Till on this lovely flower at last it fell.

“ Heartsease no more the wand’ring shepherd found,
No more the nymphs its snowy form possess,
Its white now changed to purple by Love’s wound,
Heartsease no more, but Love-in-Idleness.”

The above lines of the poet were undoubtedly suggested by the following quotation from Shakespeare, who in his “*Midsummer’s Night’s Dream*,” after describing the uselessness of Cupid’s aim at the heart of the maiden queen, alludes to the heartsease thus :—

“ Yet marked I where the bolt of Cupid fell,
It fell upon a little western flower,
Before milk white, now purpled with Love’s wound,
And maidens call it ‘ Love-in-Idleness.’ ”

The pansy of the corn field is generally a small flower of a sulphur colour, with a spot of purple on its lowest petal, but if we wander to a spot “ where once a garden smiled,” we are sure to find abundance of the purple variety.

THE WOODRUFF.

(Asperula odorato.)

Class, Tetrandria. Order, Monogynia. Nat. Ord.
Rubiaceæ.

This beautiful little snow-white flower is now in full bloom in our woods and brakes, it has eight leaves growing in a whorl on the erect and square stem, which bears a number of terminal small white blossoms, of four petals. The plants turn black in drying, and emit a pleasant odour resembling that of new made hay. It is an unobtrusive little plant, and

“Amid a thousand brighter flowers,
We scarcely note thy tender bloom,
When summer’s heat and spring time’s showers
Have called thee from thy winter tomb.

“But should we find thee withered, reft
Even of the humble charms thou hast,
We feel a fragrant sweetness left,
A sweetness that no ills can blast.

“Thus modest worth remains unknown,
While fairer beauty’s flattered name,
On every zephyr’s breath is blown
A candidate for human fame.

“Let sorrow come—mere beauty now,
Has lost its adventitious power,

While chill'd or bruised, or broken, thou
Art fragrant in thy trying hour."

The Woodruff is the emblem of "*modest worth*," and well it deserves the sentiment to be attached to its retiring and modest bloom.

"Thine excellence is of a rare degree ;
Though praised by others 'tis unknown to thee ;
In humble deeds of love, and kindly care
To those who in earth's riches own a share ;
By acts of mercy all unseen of men,
By silent victory over pride and sin,
By faith and hope, and charity on earth,
Thou prov'st to others thy transcendant worth,
Whilst to thyself thy goodness is unknown,—
Though virtue crowns and claims thee as her own."

The botanical name of this plant is derived from *asper* (rough), on account of the roughness of its leaves and stem. It has a delicate scent, almost imperceptible to some when fresh, but few flowers besides the lavender, emit so pleasant a fragrance when dried, which it retains for some years ; whilst drying, a small quantity will scent a room, and if placed among clothes will prevent injury to the garments by the moth. These pretty little wax-like blossoms are freely scattered in many of our woods, springing from the mossy carpet about the roots of the trees, and

"That delicate forest flower
With scented breath, and look so like a smile,
Seems, as it issues through the shapeless mould

An emanation of the indwelling Life,
A visible token of the upholding Love,
That are the soul of this wide universe."

BRYANT.

It is sometimes carried to bloom in the garden, as it will flourish under the drip of the trees, and is uninjured by the foliage of shrubs, it is also a suitable and very pretty plant for rockery.

THE WHITE THORN.

(*Crataegus oxyantha.*)

Class, Icosandria. Order, Pentagynia. Nat. Ord.,
Rosaceæ.

Few of our native shrubs present a more beautiful appearance than the Hawthorn in full bloom. Its opening buds are hailed under the name of May by the young, and

"They are the bright remembrances of youth,
They waft us back, with their bland odorous breath,
The joyous hours that only young life knows,
Ere we have learnt that this fair earth hides graves.
They bring the cheek that's mouldering in the dust
Again before us, tinged with health's own rose ;
They bring the voices we shall hear no more,
Whose tones were sweetest music to our ears ;
They bring the hopes that faded one by one,
Till nought was left to light our path but faith,
That we too, like the flowers, should spring to life,
But not, like them, again e'er fade or die."

COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON.

The May blossom awakens pleasing recollections of youth. It is the sweetest blossom of the loveliest month, its profusion and fragrance lay claim to our regard, for it is the ornament of every hedge. It reminds us of the days when we led a rural life, and often sauntered beneath its shade to learn our lessons.

“The odorous May, love I from my soul,
With buds like pearls in roseate light display’d ;
Chaste as some maiden robed in Hymen’s stole,
Blushing and fair,
Breathing her tremulous sighs out, half afraid,
In anxious prayer.”

This shrub is the emblem of Hope, which

“Like the glimmering taper’s light,
Adorns and cheers the way ;
And still, as darker grows the night,
Emits a brighter ray.”

GOLDSMITH.

And when we look upon it let it teach us a useful lesson. If our spirits are cast down by the loss of worldly wealth, if we grieve for the absence of a dear friend, if we are in despair through being deprived of our pleasures in this life, if we endure sorrows for the bereavements of those nearest and dearest to us, let us assure ourselves that it will be but for a season, and hope that the loss we have sustained may be exchanged for spiritual riches and happiness, and that we may meet those valued

friends in the mansions of peace where grief is never known.

“ Hope on, Hope ever !

Dark o’er us now the clouds of grief are brooding,

Hoarsely the streamlets murmur at our feet,

Bright buds of song, our eager grasp eluding,

Far from our tree of love and life retreat.

But oh ! not yet, my gentle friend, shall leave us

The fervent hope of sunshine and of joy ;

And whatsoe’er of wrong may come to grieve us,

Let there be one thing grief can ne’er destroy,

Hope on, Hope ever !”

Shakspeare writes—

“ True hope is swift and flies with swallow wings,
Kings it makes gods, and meaner creatures kings.”

And Beattie in the Minstrel gives the following lines on the immortality of the soul :

“ ——— Let those deplore their doom

Whose hope still grovels in this dark sojourn,

But lofty souls who look behind the tomb

Can smile at fate and wonder how they mourn.

Shall spring to these sad scenes no more return ?

Is yonder wave the sun’s eternal bed ?

Soon shali the orient with new lustre burn,

And spring shall soon her vital influence shed,

Again attune the grove, again adorn the mead.

“ Shall I be left forgotten in the dust,

When fate, relenting, lets the flower revive ?

Shall nature’s voice, to man alone unjust,

Bid him, though doom’d to perish hope to live ?

Is it for this fair virtue oft must strive
With disappointment, penury, and pain?
No; heaven's immortal spring shall yet arrive,
And man's majestic beauty bloom again,
Bright through the eternal year of love's triumphant
reign."

In some rural parts of our country, a high pole is fixed in the ground, and decorated with hawthorn and other blossoms, on the first of May, and the day is spent in out-door enjoyment. The youths and maidens cover themselves with boughs of hawthorn, and dance round the pole. In former times May was universally kept, and the streets of our largest cities were dressed gaily with the branches of the thorn. The youths and maidens went a Maying; and Stowe says, "crowds of them went out of the town into the sweet meadows and green woods, there to rejoice their spirits with the beauty and savour of sweet flowers, and with the harmony of birds, praising God after their kind." Our old poet, Herrick, thus invokes his lady on a May morning:

"Come, my Corinna! come, and coming, mark
How each field turns a street,—each street a park,
Made green and trimmed with trees!—see how
Devotion gives each house a bough,
Or branch, each porch, each door, ere this
An ark, or tabernacle is,
Made up of Whitethorn neatly interwove,
As if here were those cooler shades of love
Can such delights be in the street
And open fields, and we not see't?

Come, we'll abroad, and lets obey
 The proclamation made for May,
 And sin no more, as we have done, by staying,
 But, my Corinna! come, let's go a-Maying."

The Glastonbury Thorn is a variety that blooms at a much earlier period of the year, often in January and February, and in mild seasons has been known to blossom soon after Christmas, which was formerly attributed to miracle.

THE COMMON BROOM.

(*Cytisus scoparius.*)

Class, Diadelphia. Order, Decandria. Nat. Ord.,
 Leguminosæ.

This beautiful and graceful plant weaves its slender branches covered with rich papilionaceous or butterfly formed flowers over our waste land, where it is often seen growing in abundance. The peasant poet writes,

" Their groves of sweet myrtle let foreign lands reckon,
 Where bright beaming summers exalt the perfume,
 Far dearer to me yon lone glen o' green bracken
 Wi' the burn stealing under the lang yellow broom."

It is a shrubby plant, growing four or five feet high, with long straight pliant branches covered with a dark green bark ;

"The wildling Broom as sweet, which gracefully
Flings its long tresses, waving in golden beauty."

LONDON.

The corolla is of a bright golden yellow colour, with darker shades approaching to orange. It consists of several petals differing in formation, the upper one is large and broad, and is termed the standard (*vexillum*), the two sides or wings (*ala*) are spreading and converging inwardly, and the two lower pieces or keel (*carina*) are broad and blunt. It blooms in great beauty towards the end of May.

"— That delightful season when the broom,
Full flowered and visible in every steep,
Along the copses runs in veins of gold."

WORDSWORTH.

Many poets describe the broom to have a pleasant scent, and amongst the number Montgomery writes,

"The purple heath and golden broom,
Which scent the passing gale."

And another poet says,

"The wild rose, eglantine, and *broom*,
Wafted around their rich perfume."

Various medicinal properties are ascribed to the broom, and an infusion of the green stalks is said to remove obstructions of the liver and other parts,

and is famous in the dropsy and jaundice. Aristomachus, a Greek writer on agriculture, affirms that if the broom is near the spot bees will not forsake their hives. The broom is the emblem of humility, and to that sentiment we offer the following lines :—

“ *Humility* is the softening shadow before the statue
of excellence,
And lieth lowly on the ground, beloved and lovely as
the violet;
Humility is the fair hair'd maid that calleth worth her
brother,
The gentle, silent nurse, that fostereth infant virtue;
Humility bringeth no excuse; she is welcome to God
and man;
Her countenance is needful unto all who would prosper
in either world;
And the mild light of her sweet face is mirrored in the
eyes of her companions,
And straightway stand they accepted children of peni-
tence and love,
As when a blind man is nigh unto the rose, its sweet-
ness is herald of its beauty,
So when thou favourest *humility*, be sure thou art
nigh unto merit.”

F. TUPPER.

THE BUTTERCUP.

(Ranunculus bulbosa.)

Class, Polyandria. Order, Polygynia. Nat. Ord.,
Ranunculaceæ.

The bulbous rooted Crowfoot or Butter-cup at this season gives the meadows the appearance of a cloth of gold. In the days of childhood this flower was a source of exquisite delight, when we rambled and revelled among them like the butterfly, and plucked them with a rude delight. In the spring time of life, when they were strewn around our path as thick as the stars in the firmament, we sported like young lambs about the verdant pastures, heedless of the future, and unmindful of the cares and vexations this bustling world had in store for us. In after years when we have been actors in the turmoils and vicissitudes of this uncertain globe, a thousand pleasurable sensations and associations rush back to our harassed minds at the sight of the flowers beloved and cherished in our early years.

“Again we feel our hearts are dancing,
With wildly throbbing keen delight,
At the bright scene of king-cups glancing
Beneath the clear sun’s golden light.

“ Again we pluck the little flower,
The first our childhood ever knew,
And think upon the place and hour
Where and when the first one grew.

“ And as we gaze upon its cup,
Shining with burnished gold,
The faithful memory calls up
How many a friend beloved of old.”

There is nothing so harmless as the love we entertain in the days of our youth for fair and gentle flowers, when we make companions of those eternal beauties of nature, which are scattered so profusely around us in our walks.

“ Ye wild flowers! the gardens eclipse you, 'tis true,
Yet wildlings of nature, I doat upon you,
For ye waft me to summers of old ;
When the earth teem'd around me with fairy delight,
And when daisies and buttercups gladden'd my sight,
Like treasures of silver and gold.

“ I love you for lulling me back into dreams
Of the blue highland mountains and echoing streams,
And the birchen glades breathing their balm ;
While the deer was seen glancing in sunshine remote,
And the deep mellow crush of the wood pigeon's note
Made music that sweetened the calm.

“ Not a pastoral song has a pleasanter tune,
Than ye speak to my heart little wildlings of June,
Of old ruin'd castles to tell,
Where I thought it delightful your beauties to find,
When the magic of nature first breathed on my mind,
And your blossoms were part of the spell.

“ Even now what affection the violet awakes,
What loved little islands, twice seen in thy lakes,
Can the loved water-lily restore !
What landscapes I read in the primrose’s looks,
And what pictures of pebbled and minnowy brooks
In the vetches that tangle the shore.

“ Earth’s cultureless buds, to my heart you were dear
Ere the fever of passion, and ague of fear
Had scathed my existence’s bloom ;
Once I welcome you more in life’s passionless stage,
With the visions of youth to revisit my age,
And I wish you to grow on my tomb.”

The calyx, (the three little leaves under the blossom), in this species is reflexed, and the flower stem is furrowed, which are the principal marks, besides the bulbous root, which distinguish the Butter-cup from the Meadow Crowfoot (*Ranunculus acris*). The leaves are cut into three leaflets on footstalks, and each of them is cut into three divisions. This flower is considered to be the emblem of jealousy.—

“The yellow Kingcup Flora then assigned
To be the emblem of a jealous mind.”

The Meadow Crowfoot grows about the same height, is very similar in general appearance to the Buttercup, and is very common in our meadows. Poets are not so profuse in the praise of this as they are of many of our wild flowers.

"Will no one sing of thee--thou pleasing flower,
With livelier tint than daisy e'er put on,
Who, when warm Phœbus gives to May her dower,
Smiling art seen, the grass green meads among.
What time the cuckoo tunes his mellow flute,
And in the sward the grasshopper we hear,
O then, how lovely in thy yellow suit,
A smiling floral star thou dost appear.
Memory wipes off the dust of time, and sheds
Joy's retrospective of those gloomy hours
When wandering gaily through the pleasant meads,
I cull'd a copious harvest of thy flowers,
With pinafore fill'd out, a happy urchin boy,
I tumbled in the grass, and shouted wild with joy."

As we walk through a dry wood our attention is sometimes arrested by the bright golden blossoms of another species, the Wood Crowfoot (*R. auricomus*), or, as it is sometimes termed, "Goldilocks," and often trailing beneath it we discover the purplish blue blossoms of the Ground Ivy, (*Glechoma hederaceus*).

"Fair Goldilocks are blooming here,
Where Glechoma strews the ground;
Their yellow cup so bright and clear
Receive the dew distilled around.

"And here, perchance, at midnight hour,
Fays their frolic revels hold,
And find within the crowfoot flower,
Pearl drops set in leafy gold.

"Watery pearls of purest flavour,
Which they quaff to absent friends;

By the elf queen's kindly favour,
Who their moonlit sport attends.

"And as they quaff, they dance to airs,
Sighing through the trembling chords,
Formed by gentle Zephyr's cares
Of gentle twigs the wood affords;

"And as they dance, the nightingale,
Warbling forth her plaintive song,
Reminds them of her mournful tale,—
Checks the gay and joyous throng.

"Too soon they see the grey of dawn,
Rising o'er the Eastern hills,
Which bids them far from grassy lawn,
Fly to eaves by bubbling rills.

"While Phœbus courses through the air,
They on moss beds peaceful lie,
But when the moon is shining fair,
To the copse in haste they hie."

Poets in olden times have sung of the Meadow
Crowfoot and Butter-cup under the names of Gold-
cups, King-cups and Cuckoo-buds. Shakspeare
in speaking of them says,—

"When Cuckoo-buds of yellow hue,
Do paint the meadows with delight."

In these lines he must evidently have alluded to
the Crowfoot of the meadow, and not to the Marsh
Marigold (*Caltha palustris*) as some suppose. The
latter grows abundantly in moist meadows, and is
very similar in colour to the Buttercup, but con-

siderably larger. We find the poet in "Cymbeline" making mention of them under the name of Marybuds, thus,

"Hark, hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phœbus 'gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chaliced flowers that lies;
And winking Marybuds begin
To ope their golden eyes,
And every thing that pretty been,
My lady sweet arise."

THE WATER CROWFOOT,

(*Ranunculus aquatilis*,)

Belongs to the same class, order, and family as the other Crowfoots. It is found plentifully in shallow pools and rivers, where the surface is often quite white with the profusion of blossoms that are sprinkled over them. The petals are large, being equal in size to the apple blossom; the upper leaves are roundish, three lobed and cut, floating on the surface of the water, and the under ones are cut into a number of thread-like divisions. The stamens are many, of a bright yellow, and a nectary is seated at the base of each petal.

"The water Crowfoot flowers in shoals,
Like living pearls all lie
Strewn o'er the pool—that radiant path
Of stars amid the sky

Hath not a denser zone of light,
Than this small clustering silver orb,
With a dew-drop in each eye ;
Silver—but golden touched within,
Pearls—with a central light,
Snow—with a spot of sunshine seen
Like shade they are so bright."

The aquatic species is the only one of the species without noxious qualities, which is remarkable, since, in nearly every case, a plant growing in such a situation if at all of a suspicious family, would lead us to pronounce it as certainly dangerous.

THE SPEEDWELL.

(*Veronica.*)

Class, Diandria. Order, Monogynia. Nat. Ord.,
Scrophularineæ.

A number of Speedwells are now in bloom, and many of them are very familiar to most persons. The color of the carolla in the majority of them is bright blue with darker veins, and consists of one piece divided into four segments, and hence termed monopetalous. The lower segment of the blossom in all the species is much narrower than the rest, and is a striking characteristic of the fa-

mily. The blossoms are very short-lived, and fall soon after the flowers are gathered, therefore

“ Pluck, but be cautious lest you shed
The petals of the tender flower ;
And shorten thus the little hour
At most allotted it to grace
With transient bloom its native place.”

MANT.

The following species are very common. The thyme-leaved Speedwell (*Veronica serpyllifolia*), a perennial plant frequent in pastures and on road sides. It bears a small spike of pale blue blossoms; the leaves are egg-shaped, and slightly notched, The long leaved Water Speedwell (*V. anagallis*) flowers in ditches and wet places, and grows erect from two to three feet in height; the flowers are pale blue and insignificant, and the whole plant smooth and succulent. The Brooklime, (*V. beccabunga*) bears a much brighter blue blossom than the two former, and is a very common plant in water courses; the stems are decumbent and succulent, and the blossoms form a spike. The Common Speedwell, (*V. officinalis*) blooms in woods and pastures, and the Mountain Speedwell (*V. montana*), in moist woods. The Ivy-leaved Speedwell, (*V. hederifolia*), and the green procumbent Chickweed Speedwell, (*V. agrestis*), is a great pest in cultivated ground, where, if the soil be sandy, the fibres of their roots

extend to a considerable depth. There are about a dozen other species, which we shall pass without remark, as the distinction between them can only be discovered by a botanist. There is one other species, however, that must claim our particular attention as it is a great favorite ;

“ Not for thy azure tint though bright,
Nor form so elegantly light,
I single thee thou lovely flower
From others of the sylvan bower,
Thy name alone is like a spell,
And whispers love in Speed-thee-well.”

TWAMLEY.

It is by some termed the “ Forget-me-not,” but its common name is the Germander Speedwell, (*V. chamædrys*), and differs materially from the true forget-me-not, (*Myosotis palustris*.)

“ Sweet Germander ! I love thy flower
Of meek and modest blue,
Which meets the noon and evening hour,
The storm, the sunshine, and the shower,
And changeth not thy hue.”

This gay and pretty bright blue flower is very common on our banks, bearing spikes of blossoms springing from the axils of the leaves, which are long, heartshaped, wrinkled, and placed opposite on the stalk, and covered with hairy down. It is a flower that attracts the attention of every wanderer, and forms a pretty addition to our bou-

quets of wild flowers. It will even form a pretty showy bunch when only combined with the greater Stitchwort; and the following pretty lines were composed on presenting a bunch of such flowers :

“ I send thee but the simple flowers that blossom’d in
the wild,
The flowers I used to gather and delight in when a
child ;
I would not send thee gaudy blossoms from the gar-
den bed,
More mildly sweet, the wild earth’s flowers which smile
beneath our tread.

“ They teach a mood of gentleness and love to all the
earth ;
Unto the simple heart and true they tell their quiet
worth ;
And say to those who tread in peace the humble walk
of life,
Their path is strew’d with many flowers to soothe
the pains of strife.

“ They blossom in the gay fields where our sorrows
are forgot ;
Where the guilty and the stern step of the proud man
cometh not,
And though we think their ‘ perfume wasted on the
desert air,’
Yet who shall tell what angel spirit sports amidst
them there.

“ And now they bear my message unto thee, and, silent
still
Speak all the heart’s true love and lore, and kindness
and good will,

To all men lowly silent blessings, Messengers of
Heaven

To deck her bosom—cursed for sin—unto the wild
earth given.”

Its emblem is “Fidelity and Friendship,” and
as such we would allot it the following lines,

“There are some spirits fitly strung
To echo back the tones of mine ;
And those few cherished souls among
I dare dear friend to number thine.

“Angels attend thee ! may their wings
Fan every shadow from thy brow,
For only bright and loving things
Should wait on one so good as thou.

“And when my prayers are pure and strong,
As they in my best hours can be,
Amid my loved and cherished throng,
I’ll count and pray for thee.”

THE FORGET-ME-NOT.

(*Myosotis palustris*.)

Class, Pentandria. Order, Monogynia. | Nat. Ord.,
Boraginæ.

“That blue and bright eyed flow’ret of the brook
Hope’s gentle gem, the sweet Forget-me-not,”

Is blooming on the edges of our streams, grow-
ing about a foot high. The flowers are bright blue

with a yellow eye, and a small bright ray at the base of each petal. The Forget-me-not has a thousand associations tender and touching.

“The blue-eyed Forget-me-not, beautiful flower :
Half woo’d and half stolen, I brought from her bower
By the bright river’s brink, where she nestled so low,
That the water o’er stem and o’er leaflets might flow,
As if, like Narcissus, she foolishly tried
To gaze on her own gentle face in the tide.

“Half inclined, half reluctant, the flower bade adieu
To the friends left behind in the dell where she grew,
And a few shining drops from the river spray flung,
Like tears of regret on her azure eyes hung,
But I kissed them away, as a lover had done,
In joy that my fair river beauty I’d won.”

This flower is a favorite subject among German poets. The exquisite legend of this humble flower’s touching name is known to many. “A lover and his mistress were walking on the steep banks of a rapid river ; the lady was struck with the beauty of a flower on the sharpest declivity of the almost perpendicular precipice ; the young man sprang down the cliff to secure the treasure. At the moment the prize was won, the earth gave way under the lover’s tread, who, in the act of falling, threw the flower towards his mistress, uttering the words—“Forget-me-not.”

“Where flows the fountain silently,
It blooms a lovely flower,

Blue as the beauty of the sky,
It speaks with kind fidelity,
Through fortune's sun and shower,
Forget-me-not.

" 'Tis like the starry eyes, more bright
Than evening's proudest star,
Like purity's own halo light,
It seems to smile upon thy sight,
And says to thee from far—
Forget-me-not.

" Each dew-drop on its morning leaves,
Is eloquent as tears
That whisper, when young Passion grieves
For one beloved afar, and weaves—
Forget-me-not."

This simple bright blue flower is admired by all,
it is as beautiful as it is common, and

" Silent o'er the fountain gleaming,
In the silvery moonlight hour,
Bright and beauteous in its seeming,
Waves that friendly fragile flower,
Never let it be mistaken ;
Blue as Heaven's own blessed eye,
By no envious clouds o'ertaken,
When it laughs through all the sky.
Flower of Heaven's divinest hue !
Symbol of affection true !
Whisper to the poor heart-broken
Consolation—Heaven spoken."

These flowers win the favor of all who behold
them, and they are considered the emblem of
Friendship in almost every part of Europe.

“There is a little modest flower
To Friendship ever dear,
’Tis nourished in her lonely bower,
And watered by her tear.

“All other flowers when once they fade,
Are left alone to die,
But this, e’en when it is decay’d
Still lives in memory’s sigh.

“If hearts by strong affection tied
Should chance to pass the way,
This little flower would fondly chide
That heart which e’er could stray.

“Let cypress trees and willows wave,
To mark the lonely spot,
But all I’ll ask to deck my grave,
Shall be Forget-me-not.”

Lovely indeed do they look unfolding their curl of blossoms, with the rippling and lucid rivulet flowing at their feet, and gliding along at its own sweet will; if we pass such a spot whilst the noon-day’s summer sun is pouring its fervid ray upon us, is it not pleasant to linger awhile and enjoy the coolness diffused on such a scene, watching the brilliant little blue flower imbibing the liquid element so necessary to its vigorous growth, whilst the sweet warblers of the wood are pouring forth the most lively strains from their little throats, as they are perched beneath the “umbrageous multitude of leaves” that shelter us from the burning sun.

“Duty stern may bid us sever,
Tears bedew our parted lot,
Yet these flowers shall murmur ever—
Oh forget ! forget-me-not.”

Or seated upon the trunk of an aged tree that the furious blast has torn from its bed, and lies fallen across the stream, could we not spend hours in contemplating the delightful flower which recalls so many touching recollections, oh yes,

“Gem of the rill ! we love to greet
Thy blossoms trailing at our feet,
We fancy to thy flowret given
A semblance of the azure Heaven ;
And deem thine eye of gold to be
The star that gleams so brilliantly.”

Often around such a spot it springs luxuriantly from the wet sod, and at its feet trails the slender and delicate little flower of the Ivy leaved Bell flower, (*Campanula hederaceæ*) displaying its beautiful pink blossoms, whilst the Meadow Sweet (*Spiræa ulmaria*), is waving its plume of cream-coloured blossoms, and filling the air with its sweet odour.

LILY OF THE VALLEY.

(Convallaria majalis).

Class, Hexandria. Order, Monogynia. Nat. Ord.,
Smilacææ

The flower that now demands our attention is a general favourite.

“The Lily of the Vale, whose virgin flower,
Trembles at every breeze beneath its leafy bower.”

This exquisite gem, “the silver mistress of the gale,” has something about it so exceedingly lovely as to render it universally esteemed; hear the words of Hurdis :

“ ————— To the curious eye
A little monitor presents her page
Of choice instruction, with her snowy bells,
The Lily of the Vale.—She nor affects
The public walk, nor gaze of mid-day sun;
She to no state or dignity aspires,
But silent and alone puts on her suit,
And sheds her lasting perfume, but for which
We had not known there was a thing so sweet
Hid in the gloomy shade, so when the blast
Her sister tribe confounds, and to the earth
Stoops their high heads, that vainly were exposed,
She feels it not, but flourishes anew,
Still sheltered and secure. And so the storm
That makes the high elm crouch, and rends the oak,
The humble lily spares.—A thousand blows,

That shake the lofty monarch on his throne,
We lesser folks feel not.—Keen are the pangs
Advancement often brings. To be secure,
Be humble ; to be happy, be content.”

The delicate blossoms of the Lily return to our notice about the middle of gay, smiling, happy May. It is found “with its bonny bells dangling sae pure and sae white,” in some of the shady woods of England, but not very frequent. In the wood beneath the far famed Windcliff, in the picturesque county of Monmouth, it has fallen to our lot to alight upon several spots covered with the sweet bells shooting up beneath and sheltered by their large green leaves. Our attention was attracted to the spot by the prattling voices of some dozen children issuing from their sylvan retreat, and upon looking in the direction of the sounds, we discovered the little innocents with their hands full of the choice blossoms of the Lily ; and on inquiry we ascertained, they were in the habit of collecting, and disposing of them to the ladies of the adjoining village.

“ White bud ! that in meek beauty so dost lean
The cloister'd cheek, as pale as moonlight snow ;
Thou seem'st beneath thy huge high leaf of green,
An Eremite beneath his mountain's brow.

“ White bud ! thou'rt emblem of a lovelier thing—
The broken spirit that its anguish bears
To silent shades, and there sits offering
To Heaven, the holy fragrance of its tears.”

It will flourish in the shade where its more gaudy compeers would droop for want of the rays of the sun.

“The shy plant, the Lily of the Vale,
That loves the ground, and from the sun withholds
Her pensive beauty, from the breeze her sweets.”

However much we may admire the charming rose, the majestic sunflower, or the gorgeous tulip, we cannot withhold our tribute of admiration from

“The Lily, whose sweet beauties seem
As if they must be sought.”

BARTON.

And on beholding the innocent blossom, we are led to exclaim with the poet,

“There is a pale and modest flower,
In garb of green array’d,
That decks the rustic maiden’s bower,
And blossoms in the glade ;
Though other flowers around thee bloom
In gaudy splendor drest,
Filling the air with rich perfume,
I love the Lily best.

“I see the tulip’s gorgeous hue,
The sunflower’s crown of gold,
I see the rose and woodbine too
Their scented leaves unfold ;
Though they adorn the gay parterre,
I love them not so well
As the drooping Lily frail and fair,
That grows in shady dell.”

About this modest little flower we find every thing that is beautiful; no tinsel,—no flaunting gaiety,—no starry port,—no obtrusion upon our notice, but on the contrary we see in it reserve, purity, sweetness, retirement, delicacy of form and gracefulness. Percival writes,

“I had found out a sweet green spot,
Where a lily blooming fair;
The din of the city disturb'd it not,
But the spirit that shades the quiet cot
With its wings of love was there.

“I found the Lily's bloom,
When the day was dark and chill,
It seemed like a star in the misty gloom,
And it sent abroad a soft perfume,
Which is floating round me still.

“I sat by the Lily's bell,
And watch'd it many a day:—
The leaves that rose in a flowing swell,
Grew faint and dim, then droop'd and fell,
And the flower had flown away.

“I look'd where the leaves were laid,
In withering paleness by,
And as gloomy thoughts stole on me, said,
There is many a sweet and blooming maid
“Who will soon as dimly die.”

Our poets combine to sing the praises of this little gem. Barton alludes to it thus,

“And ye, whose lowlier pride
In sweet seclusion seem to sink from view,

You of the Valley named, no longer hide,
Your blossoms meet to twine the brow of purest bride."

Prior, Milton, Keats, Leigh Hunt, and many others, speak of it with affection, Bishop Mant says,

"Fair flower, that lapp'd in lonely glade,
Dost hide beneath the green wood shade,
Than whom the vernal gale
None fairer makes, on bank or spray,
Our England's Lily of the May,
Our Lily of the vale."

Pages of choice poetry could thus be selected upon this sweet favorite. Mrs. Hemans notices it thus :

"See bending to the gentle gale,
The modest Lily of the Vale ;
Hid in its leaf of tender green,
Mark its soft and humble mien.
Thus sometimes merit blooms retired,
By genius, taste, and fancy fired,
And thus 'tis oft the wanderer's lot
To rove to merit's peaceful cot,
As I have found the Lily sweet,
That blossoms in this wild retreat."

It is almost impossible to expend a moment's thought upon the Lily without recurring to that memorable passage in the sacred volume, "Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow! they toil not, neither do they spin; and yet I say unto

you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these."

"Art thou that 'Lily of the Field,'
Which, when the Saviour sought to shield
The heart from blank despair,
He showed to our mistrustful kind,
An emblem of the thoughtful mind,
Of God's paternal care?"

"Not this, I trow; for brighter shine
To the warm skies of Palestine
Those Children of the East;
There, when mild autumn's early rain
Descends on parched Esdrela's plain,
And Tabor's oak girt crest.

"More frequent than the host of night,
Those earth-born stars, as sages write,
Their brilliant disks unfold;
Fit symbols of imperial state,
Their sceptre-seeming forms elate,
And crowns of burnished gold.

"But not the less, sweet spring-tide's flower,
Dost thou display thy Maker's power,
His skill and handy-work;
Our western valley's humble child,
Where in green nook of woodland wild
Thy modest blossoms lurk.

"What though no care nor art be thine,
The loom to ply, the thread so twine,
Yet born to bloom and fade;
Thee too a lovelier robe arrays,
Than e'en in Israel's brightest days,
Her wealthiest kings array'd.

“Of thy twin leaves the embowered screen,
Which wraps thee in thy shroud of green,
Thy Eden-breathing smell;
Thy arched and purple vested stem,
Whence pendant many a pearly gem,
Displays a milk white bell;

“Instinct with life thy running root,
Which sends from earth the ascending shoot,
As rising from the dead,
And fills thy veins with verdant juice,
Charged thy fair blossoms to produce,
And berries scarlet red;

“The triple cell, the two-fold seed,
A ceaseless treasure-house decreed,
Whence aye thy race may grow,
As from creation they have grown,
While spring shall wear her flowery crown,
Or vernal breezes blow.

“Who forms thee thus, with unseen hand?
Who, at creation gave command,
And willed thee thus to be;
And keeps thee still in being through
Age after age revolving? who
But the great God is he.

“Omnipotent to work his will;
Wise, who contrives each part to fill,
The post to each assigned;
Still provident with sleepless care,
To keep, to make thee sweet and fair,
For man's enjoyment—kind!

“ ‘There is no God,’ the senseless say:
 ‘Oh God! why cast’st thou us away!’
 Of feeble faith and frail,
 The mourner breathes his anxious thought,
 By thee a better lesson taught,
 Sweet Lily of the Vale.

“ Yes, He who made and fosters thee,
 In Reason’s eye perforce must be
 Of majesty divine.
 Nor deems she that the guardian care,
 Will He in man’s support forbear,
 Who thus provides for thine.”

During this month a great number of Willows, different from those noticed last month, spring into bloom, and upwards of twenty species of the *Carex*, a tribe of plants somewhat resembling Rushes, may now by diligent search be discovered. The grasses too are now in blossom, and amongst the most frequent may be observed the sweetscented Vernal Grass, (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*); Meadow Foxtail Grass, (*Alopecurus pratensis*); Early Hair Grass, (*Aira præcox*); Wood melic Grass, (*Melica uniflora*); Annual Meadow Grass, (*Poa annua*); Meadow Cat’s tail Grass, (*Phleum pratensis*); Fine bent Grass, (*Agrostis vulgaris*); Turfy Hair Grass, (*Aira cæspitosa*); Spreading Millet Grass, (*Millium effusum*), in woods; Common Quaking Grass, (*Briza media*); Soft Brome Grass, (*Bromus mollis*); and the roughish Meadow Grass, (*Poa trivialis*).

The following flowers are now unfolding their blossoms, and should be searched after in the localities enumerated after each species :—

Common Mouse-tail, (*Myosurus minimus*) ; corn fields in gravelly soil. Baneberry, or Herb Christopher, (*Actæa spicata*) ; rare, bushy places, Halifax. Entire leaved Pæony, (*Pæona corallina*) : rare, on Steep Holmes, in Severn. Alpine Barrenwort, (*Epimedium alpinum*), rare, Bingley woods, Yorkshire ; Cumberland. Common Celandine, (*Chelidonium majus*) ; waste places near towns. Ramping Fumitory, (*Fumaria capreo-lata*) ; hedges about corn fields. Common Fumitory, (*Fumaria officinalis*) ; corn fields. Yellow Corydalis, (*Corydalis lutea*) ; old walls, Monmouthshire, Derbyshire, Yorkshire. Common Shepherd's purse, (*Capsella bursa pastoris*) ; frequent, corn fields. Naked stalked Teesdalia, (*Teesdalia nudicaulis*) ; gravelly banks. Danish Scurvy Grass, (*Cochlearia Danica*) ; muddy soil, sea coast. Speedwell leaved Whitlow Grass, (*Draba muralis*) ; rocks, in limestone counties. Tower Wall Cress, (*Arabis Turrita*) ; walls, Cambridge, Oxford. Yellow Rocket, (*Barbarea vulgaris*) ; about borders of cultivated ground. Jack by the Hedge, (*Erysimum alliaria*) ; borders of fields. Hoary Shrubby Stock, (*Matthiola incana*) ; cliffs. Great Sea Stock, (*Matthiola sinuata*) ; sea shores, Cornwall, Wales. Common Dame's Violet, (*Hesperis matronalis*) ;

hilly pastures. Wild Mustard or Charlock, (*Sinapis arvensis*); corn fields. Procumbent Pearlwort, (*Sagina procumbens*); dry pastures and waste places. Three nerved Sandwort, (*Arenaria trinervis*); moist places. Dusky Cranesbill, (*Geranium phæum*); thickets, not common, Monmouthshire. Hoary Green Weed, (*Genista pilosa*); gravelly heath. Black Medick, (*Medicago lupulina*); abundant in waste ground. Wood Bitter Vetch, (*Orobis sylvaticus*); thicket, North of England. Trailing Tormantil, (*Tormentilla reptans*); hedge banks, abundant. Field Lady's Mantle, (*Alchemilla arvensis*); fields, in gravelly soils. Red berried Bryony, (*Bryonia dioica*); hedges and thickets. Marsh Pennywort, (*Hydrocotyle vulgaris*); bogs. Wood Sanicle, (*Sanicula Europæa*); woods. Glabrous Honewort, (*Trinia glaberrima*); rare, limestone, St. Vincent's Rock, Bristol. Common Earth Nut, (*Bunium flexuosum*); pastures, abundant. Sweet Cicely, (*Myrrhis odorata*); pastures; mountainous countries. Blue Sherardia, (*Sherardia arvensis*); corn fields. Common Mouse-ear Hawkweed, (*Hieracium pilosella*); dry rocky places. Bilberry, (*Vaccinium Myrtillus*); woods and heaths, mountainous districts. Common Comfrey, (*Symphytum officinalis*); banks of rivers. Asarabacca, (*Asarum Europæum*); woods near Halifax; Lancashire; Westmoreland. Black Crowberry, (*Empetrum nigrum*); mountainous heaths,

Monmouthshire hills. Common Herb Paris, (*Paris quadrifolia*); wet and shady woods. Common Bird's Nest, (*Listera Nidus Avis*;) shady woods. Narrow-leaved White Helleborine, (*Epipactus ensifolia*); mountainous woods. Sea side Arrow Grass, (*Triglochin maritimum*;) salt marshes. Great Hairy Wood Rush, (*Lugula sylvatica*); woods, abundant.



SUMMER.

“Bright Summer beams along the sky,
And paints the glowing year;
Where'er we turn the raptur'd eye,
Her splendid tints appear!”



SUMMER.

From brightning fields of ether fair disclosed,
Child of the sun, refulgent Summer comes
In pride of youth, and felt through Nature's depth;
He comes attended by the sultry hours,
And ever fanning breezes, on his way;
While from his ardent look, the turning Spring
Averts her blushing face; and earth and skies
All smiling, to his hot dominion leaves."

THOMPSON.

DELIGHTFUL it is to notice the blendings of the Spring and Summer days; how the buds of trees and flowers burst into blossom from day to day, like the fulfilment in youth of the buds and promises of childhood.

"Beautiful Summer! I greet you well!
Binding the earth with a flowing spell,
Coming with light for the golden hours,
Bringing the rose for the nightingale's bowers;
Lading with perfume the blossoming tree,
Filling the woods with deep melody,
Coming with gladness, and joy, and light,
Beautiful Summer! the gay and bright!

"Beautiful Summer! I love you now,
For ye come with smiles for the drooping brow,

Ye have charms to gladden the weary eye,
As your perfumed breath on the gale sweeps by,
And the pale cheek kindles with rosy hue,
And the dim eye glistens like drops of dew,
And dreams of all bright and joyous things,
Are borne on the beautiful Summer's wings.

“Beautiful Summer ! your welcome is heard
In the gush of the streamlet, the song of the bird,
In the sounds that are thrilling through nature's
 bowers,
In the hum of the bee to her favorite flowers,
In the whisper that breathes from the starry night,
Like spirit voices from realms of light,
In the music that comes on the morning's wing,
As the free bird's notes through the wild woods ring

“Beautiful Summer ! the sweet and fair,
Lading with fragrance the balmy air,
Casting a fairy-like magic around,
Painting the heavens, and spangling the ground,
Heavy the brow, and dim the eye
That lightens not when the Summer is nigh,
Binding the earth with a flowery spell,
Beautiful Summer ! I love thee well !”

O Summer, blessed and happy time, noontide
of seasons, expansion and manhood of the year :
nature now perfects her delights, for the eye and
the ear, the taste and the touch of man.

“They may boast of the Spring time when flowers are
 fairest,
And birds sing by thousands on every green tree ;
They may call it the loveliest, the greenest, the rarest,
But the Summer's the season that's dearest to me.

“ For the brightness of sunshine ; the depth of the shadows ;

The crystal of waters ; the fulness of green ;
And the rich flow’ry growth of the old pasture meadows,

In the glory of Summer alone can be seen.

“ Say, when are the flowers, that in beauty are growing,

In the gardens and fields of the young merry Spring ;
Like the mountain side wilds of the yellow broom blowing,

And the old forest pride—the green wastes of the ling.

“ When the garden no longer is leafless and chilly,
But warm with the sunshine, and bright with the sheen

Of rich flowers, the moss-rose and the bright tiger-lily,

Barbaric in pomp, as an Ethiop queen.

“ Yes, the Summer, the radiant Summer is fairest,
For green woods and mountains, for meadows and bowers,

For waters and fruits, and for blossoms the rarest,
And for bright shining butterflies, lovely as flowers.”

The hills wave with the leafy honours of their hundred trees, and the vallies smile as the light winds rustle the clover and the corn ; and the birds’ sweet winged voices are again heard in harmony and love. The sun now sheds his glowing heat, and lights up all nature with joy and gladness :

“When, ’stead of one unchanging breeze,
There blows a thousand gentle airs,
And each a different perfume bears,
As if the loveliest plants and trees
Had vassal breezes of their own
To watch and wait on them alone,
And waft no other breath than theirs !”

MOORE.

The flowers in their thousand tints and shapes,
and perfumes, are each a miracle of beauty, yet
they are plentiful as the dews which nourish
them.

“Summer ! delicious summer, thou dost fling
Thy unbought treasures o’er the glorious earth ;
Music is in thy step, and in thine eye
A flood of sunshine ! on thy brow is wreathed
Garlands that wither not, and in thy breath
Are all the perfumes of Arabia.”

JUNE.



“Seemed all the rest in beauty to excell,
Crowned with a rosie girlond that right well
Did her beseeme; and ever as the crew
About her daunst, sweet flowers that far did smell,
And fragrant odours they upon her threw.”

FAIRIE QUEEN.

“Now comes the rosy June and blue-eyed hours,
With songs of birds, and stir of leaves and wings,
And run of rills, and bubble of bright springs,
And hourly burst of pretty buds to flowers.”

WEBBE.

SUMMER begins in June, which is really in this climate, what the poets represented May to be,—the most lovely month of the year. The trees are now in their fullest garniture, and the fields in full blossom with the clover and the still more exquisite bean, of which the poet Thomson speaks thus:—

“Long let us walk
Where the breeze blows from yon extended field
Of blossom'd beans. Arabia cannot boast
A fuller gale of joy, than, lib'ral thence
Breathes through the sense and takes the ravish'd
soul.”

June was named by Romulus either from the Pagan goddess Juno, in honour of whom a festival was celebrated in this month, or out of compliment to the *junior* or inferior branches of the Roman senate. The Saxons called it *weyd monat*, because the beasts did then wey'd or go to feed in the meadows.

“There’s perfume upon every wind,
Music in every tree,
Dews for the moisture loving flowers,
Sweets for the sucking bee ;
The sick come forth for the healing breeze,
The young are gathering flowers,
And life is a tale of potry,
That is told by golden hours.”

The hedges are now ornamented with the blossoms of the wild rose, which blushes through all the gradations of white and red, and in addition to the flowers of May, the meadow-sweet and corn-cockle now blossom in profusion, and the gaudy poppy waves its delicate petals in the corn fields, and

“The flowers in silence seem to breathe
Such thoughts as language could not tell.”

BYRON.

Blest month of sunshine and of smiles, before thy coming the earth was strewed with flowers, and the trees were clothed with leaves by thy sweet sister May ; she wiped away the tears of her

forerunner April; breathed sweetness over the land, which is now laden with beauty and perfume, and left it to her successor to admire and enjoy.

“God made the flowers to beautify
The earth, and cheer man’s careful mood;
And he is happiest who hath power
To gather wisdom from a flower,
And wake his heart in every hour
To pleasant gratitude.”

WORDSWORTH.

Over hill and dale the sunbeam dances, and around us the heads of the grasses tremble with delight, and

“When thus creation’s charms around combine,
Amid the store should thankless pride repine?”

GOLDSMITH.

The little blossoms of yellow, pink, blue, and scarlet, open their honey treasures to the myriads of fluttering insects which have just burst from their long retreat into life and enjoyment. And even in the distance you see the sunbeam extends, so wide is the diffusion of the genial influence.

“Blest power of sunshine! genial day,
What balm, what life is in thy ray,
To feel thee is such real bliss,
That had the world no joy but this—
To sit in sunshine calm and sweet,
It were a world too exquisite.”

LALLA ROOKH.

Pleasure is said to be like a Rose in June, bright and transient, but not without its thorn; but if the pleasure be harmless, the blossoms will smell sweet in their decay.

Haymaking is now become general, and in our rambles, our eyes fall frequently on the mowers at work, green swathes of newly mown grass, or hay-cocks ready to be borne off, exhaling a delicious fragrance, and reminding us of the lines in the "Farmer's Boy."

"Hark ! where the sweeping scythe now rips along,
Each sturdy mower emulous and strong,
Whose writhing form meridian heat defies,
Bends o'er his work, and every sinew tries;
Prostrates the waving treasure at his feet,
But spares the rising clover, short and sweet."

The odour of the sweet scented vernal grass, (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*), which gives the delightful scent to the new-made hay, and "winnows fragrance round the smiling land;" the gaiety of all surrounding objects, and the genial temperature of the air, all combine to render June a period of delight. It is the season of roses and full blown flowers of joy; it is in this month that we expect to see "the gardens of Gul in their bloom." The sweet breath of hundreds of flowers agreeably salute the nostrils, and liberally dispense their odoriferous riches around.

"We tread on flowers, flowers meet our every glance,
It is the scene—the season of romance,
The very bridal of the earth and sky."

How delicately does the woodbine embalm the morning walk ; the air is all perfume : what inducement to leave the bed of sloth, and wander

‘ Where nature’s grand romantic charms invite
The glowing rapture of the soul refined ;
In scenes like these the young poetic mind
May court the dreams of fancy with delight.”

Who would lie dissolved in senseless slumber, while so many breathing sweets invite him to a feast of fragrancy ; especially considering that the advancing day will exhale the volatile dainties ? How delightful is this fragrance ! it is distributed in the nicest proportions ; neither so strong as to oppress the organs, nor so faint as to elude them.

“ Oh, lovely flowers ! the earth’s rich diadem,
Bright resurrection from her sable tomb,
Ye are the eyes of Nature ! her best gem--
With which she tints her face with living bloom,
And breathes delight in gales of rich perfume ;
Emblems ye are of Heaven, and heavenly joy,
And starry brilliance in a world of gloom,
Peace, innocence, and guileless infancy
Claim sisterhood with you, and holy is the tie.”

One can scarcely be melancholy within the atmosphere of flowers, such lively hues and such delicious odours, not only address themselves agreeably to the senses, but with a surprising delicacy to the sweetest emotions of the mind.

THE MEADOW LYCHNIS.

(Lychnis Flos Cuculi.)

Class, Decandria Order, Pentagynia. Nat. Ord.,
Caryophyllææ.

Moist meadows are the favorite places of growth for this gay plant, where it stands prominent among the rushes, cotton reed, and orchises, for wherever these grow the Meadow Lychnis, (or Ragged Robin, as it is also called) is sure to be met with.

“How gaily Ragged Robin stands,
’Mid cotton grass and rushes ;
Pleased he thrives in marshy lands,
Nor envies gaudy bushes.

“Gaudy bushes would conceal him
From the sunbeam’s cheerful heat,
Which he loves to feel so near him,
Standing in the moistened peat.”

The plant grows about a foot high, the flowers are rose colored and grow in a panicle. The petals are cut into several narrow divisions, which gives it a ragged appearance ; the stems are hairy below, and of a reddish green above.

“Oh, Robin loves to prank him rare,
With fringe and flounce and all,
Till you’d take him for a lady fair
Just going to a bail.





THE ROSE AND LILY

“Robin’s a roguish merry lad,
He dances in the breeze,
And looks up with a greeting glad
To the rustling hedge row trees.”

Another species of the *Lychnis* is the Red Cam-
pion, (*Lychnis dioica*), the flowers of which are
dioecious, that is, having stamens only in the flow-
ers on some plants, and pistils only in those of
others. It bears a prettier and brighter red blos-
som than the Meadow *Lychnis*, and is a more ge-
neral favorite. This flower is sometimes found
white, pink, and flesh colour.

THE DOG ROSE.

(*Rosa canina*.)

Class, Icosandria. Order, Polyginia. Nat. Ord.,
Rosaceæ.

We have several species of the wild Rose grow-
ing in our hedges and woods, and amongst the
most frequent are the common Dog Rose, (*Rosa*
canina); Close styled Dog Rose, (*Rosa systyla*);
Field Dog Rose, (*R. arvensis*); Downy leaved
Dog Rose, (*R. tormentosa*); and the Sweet Briar,
or Eglantine, (*R. rubiginosa*). The hedges dur-
ing this month are spangled with their rich blos-
soms.

“Child of the summer, charming Rose!
No longer in confinement lie;
Arise to light; thy form discover,
Rival the spangles of the sky.

“The rains are gone, the storms are o’er,
Winter retires to make thee way,
Come then, thou sweetly blushing flower,
Come, lovely stranger, come away.”

The “Lady Rose,” as this queen of beauty has been designated, has had the first honours in the poetic world awarded to it, for what it is not easy to define, unless from its exquisite combination of perfume, form and colour, which has entitled this sovereign of flowers in the east to be mated with the nightingale, as Moore beautifully writes :

“There’s a bower of Roses by Bendemeer’s stream,
And the nightingales sung round it all the day long;
In the time of my childhood ’twas like a sweet dream,
To sit in the roses and hear the bird’s song.
That bower and its music I never forget,
But oft when alone in the bloom of the year
I think is the nightingale singing there yet,
Are the roses still bright by the calm Bendemeer.

“No, the roses are wither’d, that hang o’er the wave,
But some blossoms were gathered while freshly they
shone;
And a dew was distilled from their flowers that gave
All the fragrance of summer, when summer was
gone.

Thus memory draws from delight ere it dies
An essence that breathes of it many a year ;
Thus bright to my soul, as 'twas then to my eyes,
Is that bower on the banks of the calm Bendemeer."

That exquisite perfume, the otto of Roses is distilled from the blossoms of the rose. Many charming illustrations of the love of the nightingale for the rose, are included in the oriental legends and traditions.

"Where the soft Persian maid, the breath inhales,
Of love-sick Roses wooed by nightingales."

In a fragment of the Bulbul Nameh, or Book of the Nightingale, all the birds appear before Solomon and charge the nightingale with disturbing their rest, by the broken and plaintive strains which he warbles forth in a sort of frenzy and intoxication. The nightingale is summoned, questioned and acquitted by the wise king, because the bird assures him that his vehement love for the rose drives him to distraction, and causes him to break forth into those languishing and touching complaints which are laid to his charge."

Thus the Persians believe that the nightingale in spring flutters round the rose bushes uttering incessant complaints, till overpowered by the strong scent, he drops stupified to the ground.

Moore, in again speaking of those eastern climes "Where hearts open like the season's rose," says,

“ Who has not heard of the vale of Cashmere,
With its roses, the brightest that earth ever gave,
Its temples, and grottos, and fountains as clear
As the love lighted eyes that hang over the wave.

“ Oh ! to see it at sunset—when warm o’er the lakes,
Its splendour at parting a summer eve throws,
Like a bride full of blushes when lingering to take
A last look at the mirror at night ere she goes.

“ When the shrines through the foliage are gleaming
half shown,
And each hallows the hour by some rites of its own,
Here the music of prayer from a minaret swells,
Here the magian his urn, full of perfume is swing-
ing,
And here at the altar a zone of sweet bells
Round the waist of some fair Indian dancer is
ringing.

“ Or to see it by moonlight—when mellowly shines
The light o’er its palaces, gardens and shrines ;
When the waterfalls gleam like a quick fall of stars,
And the nightingale’s hymn from the Isle of Chemars
Is broken by laughs and light echoes of feet,
From the cool shining walks where the young people
meet.

“ Or the morn, when the magic of daylight awakes
A new wonder each minute, as slowly it breaks,
Hills, cupolas, fountains, call’d forth every one
Out of darkness, as if just born of the sun.

“ When the spirit of fragrance is up with the day,
From his harem of night flowers stealing away ;
And the wind full of wantonness woos like a lover
The young aspen trees till they tremble all over.

“When the East is as warm as the light of first hopes,
And day with its banner of radiance unfurl’d,
Shines in through the mountainous portals that opes
Sublime, from the valley of bliss to the world.”

This “floweret of a hundred leaves” in the East,

“The land of the myrtle, the rose and the vine,
Where the fields ever bloom, and the skies ever shine,”

is an object of peculiar esteem, and the acceptance of it when offered is a token of the highest favour. Byron introduces a passage illustrating the practice in the “Bride of Abydos,” in Zuleika’s attempt to soothe Selim’s mind.

“‘What sullen yet? it must not be—
Oh! gentle Selim this from thee!’
She saw in curious order set
The fairest flowers of Eastern land—
He loved them once; may touch them yet,
If offered by Zuleika’s hand.—
The childish thought was hardly breath’d
Before the rose was pluck’d and wreath’d,
The next fond moment saw her seat
Her fairy form at Selim’s feet.

“‘What, not receive my foolish flower?
Nay, then, indeed, I am unblest;
On me can thus thy forehead lower,
And know’st thou not who loves thee best.
Oh! Selim, dear, oh! more than dearest,
Say, is it me thou hat’st or fearest:

Come lay thy head upon my breast,
 And I will kiss thee into rest,
 Since words of mine and songs must fail,
 Even from my fabled nightingale.

“ ‘ I know my sire at times was stern,
 But this from thee had yet to learn,
 Too well I know he loves thee not,
 But is Zuleika’s love forgot.’ ”

In our country the Rose was chosen with the distinction of white and red, as the badge of the rival houses of York and Lancaster, the white being chosen by the former. Shakspeare in his historical play of Henry VI. represents this feud as having originated at the Temple garden, in which the Earls of Suffolk, Somerset, and Warwick, Richard of Plantagenet, and others are introduced, The Earl of Suffolk says,—

“ ‘ Within the Temple hall we were
 too loud,
 The garden here is more convenient.’ ”

PLANTAGENET—“ ‘ Since you are tongue-tied and so
 loth to speak,
 In dumb significance proclaim your
 thoughts,
 Let him that is a true-born gentleman,
 man,
 And stands upon the honour of his
 birth,
 If he supposes I have pleaded truth,
 From off this briar pluck a *white rose*
 with me.’ ”

SOMERSET—"Let him who is no coward nor a
flatterer,
But dare maintain the party of the
truth
Pluck a *red rose* from off this thorn
with me."

The example is followed by their partizans, after which Warwick says to Plantagenet—

"In signal of my love to thee,
Will I upon thy party wear this rose,
And here I prophecy, this brawl to-day,
Grown to this faction in the Temple garden,
Shall send between the *red rose* and the *white*
A thousand souls to death and deadly night."

It would be difficult to trace the supremacy of the rose to its origin; but mankind have so generally agreed in paying homage to its charms, that our associations in the present day are chiefly with the poetic strains with which they are celebrated.

"Yes, lovely flower! I find in thee,
Wild sweetness which no words express;
And charms in thy simplicity,
That dwelt not in the pride of dress."

The beauty of the rose is exhibited under so many different forms, that it would be impossible to say which had the greatest claim upon the regard of the poet; but certainly those kinds which have been introduced, or those which are reared

by unnatural means with care and difficulty are to us the least poetical, because our associations with them are comparatively few, and those few to garden culture.

“Oh, floweret wild !
Drooping with many a glittering tear,
The summer's most beloved child,
Thou'rt welcome here !

“I speak not of that shadowy bloom
Which leaning through the leaves we see,
Nor of thy soft and rich perfume,
Sweet though it be :—

“Thou hast a spell,
A charm far dearer to my heart,
The power of days long past to tell,
Of hopes that would depart !

“Yes, gazing on thee now,
The scenes beloved can memory draw,
When simple childhood's hat of straw
Shaded my careless brow :

“And round it clustered many a wreath
Of blossoms wild and sweet as thou,
And lighter was the heart beneath
Than it is now.

“But pass we that, no thoughts of grief
Thy flowers unto my bosom bring ;
But hallowed is each fragrant leaf
With dreams of hope and spring.

"Thou bring'st me back the time
When I would pause from morn till even,
To hear the sweet bells distant chime,
Like melody from heaven.

"I gaze—thou art no more a flower,
But some bright scene of early youth,
The wild wood side—a summer bower,
All clear and pure as truth."

The rose is an emblem of "Love."

"The blushing rose that hangs its head,
Or meets the sun with shrinking dread,
Conceals within its heart a flame,
Which from that glowing noontide came.

"So have I loved : but some strange spell
Forbids my heart its tale to tell ;
Here take this simple rose and *feel*
The love my lips dare not reveal."

Nature seems to have exhausted all her skill in the freshness, and beauty of form, the fragrance, the delicate colour, and the gracefulness which she has bestowed upon the rose.

"Ah ! see the virgin rose, how sweetly she
Doth first peep forth with bashful modesty,
That fairer seems the less ye see her way !
Lo ! see soon after, how more bold and free,
Her bared bosom she doth broad display,
Lo ! see soon after how she fades and falls away."

SPENSER.

The poets have not exaggerated its beauty, or completed its panegyric. They have called it the "Daughter of Heaven;" Ornament of the earth;" Glory of Spring;" but what expressions could ever do justice to the charms of this beautiful flower.

"Queen of fragrance! lovely rose,
Thy soft and silken leaves disclose;
The winter's past, the tempests fly,
Soft gales breathe gently through the sky;
The silver dews and genial showers
Call forth a blooming waste of flowers;
And lo! thy beauties now uncloset,
Queen of fragrance, lovely Rose!"

The Rose mingles with our festivities, our joys, and our griefs. Modesty borrows its delicate blush—it is given as the prize of virtue—it is the image of youth, innocence, and pleasure. It is consecrated to Venus, and like her possesses a grace more exquisite than beauty itself; it is the commonest of all flowers—the emblem of all ages—the interpreter of all our feelings.

"While we invoke the wreathed Spring,
Resplendent Rose! to thee we'll sing;
Resplendent Rose! the flower of flowers,
Whose breath perfumes Olympus' bowers.
Whose virgin blush of chasten'd dye,
Enchants so much our mortal eye;
When pleasure's blooming season glows,
The graces love to twine the Rose;

Oft has the poet's magic tongue
The Rose's fair luxuriance sung;
And long the muses, heavenly maids,
Have reared it in their tuneful shades;
When at the early glance of morn
It steps upon the glittering thorn :
'Tis sweet to dare the tangled fence,
To cull the timid floweret thence,
And wipe with tender hand away
The tear that on its blushes lay !
'Tis sweet to hold the infant stems
Yet drooping with Aurora's gems,
And fresh inhale the spicy skies,
That from the weeping buds arise,
When revel reigns and mirth is high,
And Bacchus beams in every eye,
Our rosy fillets scent exhale
And fill with balm the fainting gale !
Oh ! there is naught in nature bright
Where roses do not shed their light !
When morning paints the orient skies,
Her fingers burn with roseate dyes,
And when at length, with pale decline
Its florid beauties fade and pine,
Sweet as in youth its balmy breath
Diffuses odour e'en in death !
O, whence could such a plant have sprung ?
Attend—for thus the tale is sung :—
When humid from the silvery stream,
Effusing beauty's warmest beam,
Venus appeared in flushing hues,
Mellow'd by ocean's briny dews ;
When in the starry courts above
The pregnant brain of mighty Jove,
Disclose the nymph of azure glance—
The nymph who shakes the martial lance,

Then, then in strange eventful hour
The earth produced an infant flower,
Which sprung with blushing tinctures dress'd,
And wanton'd o'er its parent breast;
The gods beheld the brilliant birth,
And hail'd the Rose, the boon of earth!
With nectar drops, a ruby tide,
The sweetly orient buds they dyed,
And made them bloom the flowers divine,
Of him who sheds the teeming vine,
And bid them on the spangled thorn
Expand their blossoms to the morn."

After all the pains that have been taken to procure, transplant, and propagate the rose, there is one *kind* perpetually blooming around us through the summer months, without the aid or interference of man, which seems to defy his art to introduce a rival to its own unparalleled beauty—

"I love the Rose,—that simple one
Which decks the hedges, delicately white,
Or blushing like a maiden's cheek so slight,
The eye looks anxious lest the tint be gone,
Ere it hath gazed enough, or ere the spray
Can from the parent tree be slipped away."

The common Wild Rose is so luxuriant that it bursts spontaneously into blushing life, sometimes crowning the hoary rock with a blushing garland, and sometimes struggling with the matted weeds of the wilderness, yet ever finding its way to the open day, that it may bask and smile, and look up with thankfulness to the God of day, without

whose rays its cheeks would know no beauty ; so tender, that the wild bee that nestled in its perfumed bosom when the sun sunk to rest, returns in the morning and finds the colour faded from its cheek, while by its side a infant rose is unfolding with the blush of a cherub, expanding its petals to live its little day, and then having expended its sweetness, to die like its fair sister without murmur or regret.

“ The rose, the sweetly blooming rose,
Ere from the tree it's torn,
Is like the charm which beauty shows,
In life's exulting morn.

“ But oh ! how soon its sweets are gone,
How soon it withering lies !
So when the eve of life comes on,
Sweet beauty fades and dies.

“ Then, since the fairest form that's made,
Soon withering we shall find,
Let us possess what ne'er will fade—
The beauties of the *mind* !”

According to the ancient fable the red colour of the rose, may be traced to Venus, who whilst hastening to the relief of her beloved Adonis, had her delicate foot pierced with a thorn, and caused it to bleed,

“ Which on the White Rose being shed,
Made it for ever after Red.”

HERRICK.

Carey has traced its tint to another source :

“As ’erst in Eden’s blissful bowers,
Young Eve survey’d her countless flowers,
An opening rose of purest white
She mark’d with eye that beam’d delight,
Its leaves she kissed and straight it drew
From beauty’s lips the vermeil hue.”

Drummond, in his verse, asserts that the Rose
sprung from the blood of Adonis,—

“Flower which of Adonis’ blood
Sprang, when of that clear flood
Which Venus wept, another white was born,
The sweet Cynarian youth thou lively shows
But this sharp pointed thorn,
So proud about that crimson fold that grows,
What doth it represent ?
Boar’s teeth perhaps, his milk white flank that rent.
O show in one of unesteemed worth,
That both the killed and the killer setteth forth.”

In Fawkes’ translation it runs thus—

“As many drops of blood as from the wound,
Of fair Adonis trickled on the ground,
So many tears she (Venus) shed in copious showers,
Both tears and drops of blood were turn’d to flowers.
From these in crimson beauty sprang the Rose
Cerulean—bright anemonies from those.”

Ovid says that anemonies, and not roses, sprung
from the blood of Adonis.

Blooming in the sterile waste, this lovely flower
is seen unfolding its fair leaves where there is no

beauty to reflect its own, and thus calling back the heart of the weary to thoughts of peace and joy, reminding him that the wilderness of human life, though rugged and barren to the discontented beholder, has also its sweet flowers, not the less welcome for being unlooked for, nor the less lively for being cherished by a hand unseen.

“How much of memory dwells amidst thy bloom,
Rose! ever wearing beauty for thy dower!
The bridal-day—the festival—the tomb,
Thou hast thy part in each, thou stateliest flower.

“Therefore, with thy soft breath come floating by
A thousand images of love and grief;—
Dreams filled with tokens of mortality;
Deep thoughts of all things beautiful and brief.

“Not such thy spells o’er those who hail’d thee first
In the clear light of Eden’s golden day,
There thy rich leaves to crimson glory burst,
Link’d with each dim remembrance of decay.

“Rose, for the banquet gathered and the bier;
Rose! coloured now by human hope and pain,
Surely where death is not, nor change nor fear,
Yet we may meet thee, joy’s own flower, again.”
HEMANS.

There is one circumstance connected with the rose which renders it a more true and striking emblem of earthly pleasure than any other flower—it bears a thorn.

While its odorous breath is floating on the

summer gale, and its blushing cheek half hid amongst the sheltering leaves, it seems to woo, and yet shrink from the beholder's gaze ; touch with but adventurous hand the Queen of flowers, and you are pierced with its protecting thorns ; would you pluck the rose and weave it into a garland for the brow you love best, that brow will be wounded ; or place the sweet blossom in your bosom, the thorn will be there. This real or ideal mingling of pain and sorrow, with the exquisite beauty of the rose, affords a never ending theme to those who are best acquainted with the inevitable blending of clouds and sunshine, hope and fear, weal and woe, in this our earthly inheritance.

The origin of the armour by which this flower is defended, is given in the "Legend of the Rose."

“ Young Love, rambling through the wood,
Found me in my solitude,
Bright with dew and freshly blown,
And trembling to the zephyr's sighs,
But as he stooped to gaze upon
The living gem with raptur'd eyes,
It chanc'd a bee was busy there,
Searching for its fragrant fare,
And, Cupid stooping too to sip,
The angry insect stung his lip ;
And gushing from the ambrosial cell,
One bright drop on my bosom fell.

“ Weeping to his mother, he
Told the tale of treachery,

And she, her vengeful boy to please,
Strung his bow with captive bees,
And placed upon my slender stem
The poison'd stings she pluck'd from them;
And none since that eventful morn
Have found the flower without a thorn."

"With every thing fair or sweet, or exquisite in this world, it has seemed meet to that wisdom which appoints our sorrows and sets a bound to our enjoyments, to affix some stain, some bitterness, or some alloy, which may not unaptly be called, in figurative language, a thorn. St. Paul emphatically speaks of a "thorn in the flesh," and from this expression as well as from his earnestness in having prayed thrice that it might be removed, we conclude it must have been something particularly galling to the natural man."*

We hear of the thorn of ingratitude, the thorn of envy, the thorn of unrequited love, indeed of thorns as numerous as our pleasures; and few there are that can look back upon the experience of life, without acknowledging that every earthly good they have desired, purchased or attained, has had its peculiar thorn. Who has ever cast himself into the lap of luxury, without finding that his couch was strewed with thorns? Who has reached the summit of his ambition, without feeling on the exalted pinnacle that he stood upon thorns? Who has ever placed the diadem upon his

* "Poetry of Life," by Mrs. Strickland.

brow, without perceiving that thorns are thickly set within the royal circlet? Who has folded to to his bosom all that he desired of earth's treasures, without feeling that bosom pierced with thorns? All that we enjoy in this life has its accompaniment. The more intense the enjoyment the sharper the thorn; and those who have described the inner workings of the human heart, have unfailingly touched upon this fact, with the melancholy sadness of truth.

Far be it from one who would not unwittingly fall under the stigma of ingratitude, to disparage the nature of the number of earthly pleasures,—pleasures which are spread before us without price or limitation in our daily walk and in our nightly rest—pleasures which lie scattered around our path when we go forth upon the hills, or wander in the valleys, when we look up to the starry sky or down to the fruitful earth—pleasures which unite the human family in one bond of fellowship, surround us at our board, cheer us at our fireside, smooth the couch on which we slumber—and even follow our wandering steps long, long after we have ceased to regard them with gratitude or joy. I speak of the wounds inflicted by these thorns, with a living consciousness of their poignancy and anguish; because exquisite and dear as mere earthly pleasure may sometimes be, I would still contrast them with such as are not earthly. I would contrast the thorn and the

wound, the disappointment and the pain which accompany all such pleasures as are merely temporal, with the fulness of happiness, the peace and the crown accompanying those which are eternal.

“ Author of beauty ! Spirit of power !

Thou that didst will that the Rose should be :
Here is the place, and this the hour

To seek thy presence and bow to thee
Bright is the world with the sun’s first rays,

Cool is the dew on the soft green sod,
The Rose-tree blooms while the birds sing praise,
And earth gives glory to nature’s God.

“ Under this beautiful work of thine,

The flowery boughs that are bending o’er
The glistening turf to thy will divine,

I kneel, and its maker and mine adore !
Thou art around us, the robe of light

Touches the gracefully waving tree,
Turning to jewels the tears of night,
And making the buds unfold to thee

“ Thy name is marked in delicate lines

On flower and leaf that deck the stem ;
Thy care is seen and thy wisdom shines

In even the thorn that is guarding them.
Now while the Rose that has burst her cup,

Opens her heart and freely throws
To me her odours, I offer up

Thanks to the Being who made the Rose.

The rose has been a favourite subject with the poets in all countries and in all ages ; and in my-

thological allusions it is equally fertile. It was dedicated by the Greeks to Aurora, as an emblem of youth, from its freshness and reviving fragrance; and to Cupid, as an emblem of fugacity and danger, from the fleeting nature of its charms, and the wounds inflicted by its thorns. It was given by Cupid to Harpocrates, the god of silence, as a bribe to prevent him from betraying the amours of Venus; hence it was adopted as symbolical of silence. The Rose was for this reason frequently sculptured on the ceiling of drinking and feasting rooms as a warning to the guests, that what was said in the moments of convivality should not be repeated.

“ The Rose is Venus’ flower ;—the archer boy
Gave to Harpocrates his mother’s flower,
What time the fond lovers told the tender joy
To guard with sacred secrecy the hour ;
Hence, o’er his festive board the host uphung
Love’s flower of silence to remind each guest,
When wine to amorous sallies loosed the tongue,
Under the rose what pass’d must never be express’d.”

Among the Romans, the Rose was an especial favorite. They garnished their dishes with it; wore garlands of it at their feasts; strewed their banquetting apartments with its leaves; and their ladies used rosewater as a perfume. In the Catholic church, a golden rose was considered so honourable a present that none but crowned heads

were thought worthy either to give or receive it. Roses of this kind were sometimes consecrated by the Popes on Good Friday, and given to such potentates as it was their particular interest or wish to load with favours. The flower itself being an emblem of the mortality of the body, and the metal of which it was composed of the immortality of the soul.

“There is a magic in that flower,
That still their leaves a fragrance spread,
Though parted many a sunny hour
From the stem which nourished !

“Meet emblem of the converse high,
Even in a world of sorrow known,
Which wafts the soul in extacy
Before the eternal throne.

“These are the spirit’s dates of bliss,
In God’s own book of record found,
When tuned to heavenly symphonies,
Our notes of praise resound.

“And then, oh ! fading, sapless Rose,
Token of sweet communion o’er,
Thy being’s source unchanging flows,
Since on the tree of life it grows,
On the celestial shore.”

As a symbol of beauty and innocence, it was customary, in some countries, to award a crown of roses, to the girl who should be acknowledged by all her competitors to be the most amiable, mo-

dest, and dutiful in their native village, a custom which, until very recently was performed in some districts of France.

The Rose (to quote the dramatist)

“ Is the very emblem of a maid;
For when the west wind courts her gently,
How modestly she blows and paints the sun
With her chaste blushes ! when the north comes near
her,
Rude and impatient, then, like chastity,
She locks her beauties in her bud again,
And leaves him to base briars.”

In the days of chivalry the knights at a tournament wore a rose embroidered on their sleeves, as an emblem that gentleness should accompany courage, and that beauty was the reward for valour. About this period the rose was considered so precious in France, that in several parts of the country, none but the rich and powerful were allowed to cultivate it ; but in the latter times we find that the owners of manors were empowered to levy a tax or tribute on their tenants, of so many bushels of roses, which were used not only for making rose-water, but for covering tables with instead of napkins.

There is one of the wild species of the Rose that claims culture in every garden, for the odoriferous property of its leaves ; and the delightful fragrance of the Sweet Briar (*Rosa rubiginosa*), every one

is acquainted with, for after a shower where is there a perfume more exquisite to be found than the Sweet Briar throws around.

“ Our sweet autumnal western scented wind
 Robs of its odours none so sweet a flower,
 In all the blooming waste it left behind,
 As that the sweet briar yields it; and the shower
 Wets not a rose that buds in beauty’s bower
 One half so lovely; yet it grows along
 The poor girl’s pathway, by the poor maid’s door,
 Such are the humble folks it dwells among,
 And humble as the bud, so humble be the song.

“ I love it, for it takes its untouched stand
 Not in the vase, that sculptors decorate;
 Its sweetness is all of my native land,
 And e’en its fragrant leaf has not its mate
 Among the perfumes which the rich and great
 Buy from the odours of the spicy East:
 You love your flowers and plants, and will you hate
 Your little four-leaved Rose that I love best,
 And freshest will awake, and sweetest go to rest.”
 BRAINARD.

THE YELLOW HORNED POPPY.

(*Glaucium luteum.*)

Class, Polyandria. Order, Monogynia. N. O. Papaveraceæ.

As we traverse on the banks of many of the salt water rivers, our attention is attracted by the

large dark yellow blossoms of the horned Poppy : the blossoms are succeeded by pods from six to ten inches in length, which are minutely tuberculated : the whole plant is glaucous, the stem smooth, with leaves embracing it. The study of such plants growing only on the sea coast, a great portion of mankind must necessarily be debarred from gaining a knowledge of by their remote residence from the shores where they bloom ; but in these times, thousands fly on the approach of summer from the smoky confines of cities, to breathe the bracing air of the sea coast, where there is ample means for gratifying the love of nature by turning to her attractive works and investigating the various native plants that grow upon the shores.

COMMON RED POPPY

(*Papaver Rhæas.*)

Class, Polyandria. Order, Monogynia. N. O., Papavaraceæ.

Every one is acquainted with the flaunting Red Poppy of the corn fields. Its bright red blossoms, its hairy stem and thin petals, are often before our eyes as we ramble on a summer day among the ears of yellow corn.

"We little red caps are among the corn,
Merrily dancing at early morn :
We know that the farmer hates to see
Our saucy red faces, but here are we."

According to the Grecian mythology the Poppy owed its origin to Ceres, who created it to assuage her grief during her search after her daughter Proserpine, who had been carried off by Plato.

"Indulgent Ceres knew my worth,
And to adorn the teeming earth
She bade the Poppy rise "

COWLEY.

The juice extracted from the white Poppy is employed to ease pain and procure sleep to the restless invalid, and is of essential service in some disorders.

"Sleep bringing Poppy, by the ploughman late
Not without cause to Ceres consecrate."

In floral language the Poppy is the symbol of Consolation, and as such we would address to it the following lines :—

"Adieu, bright Rose ! thy charms no more
To this sad breast are dear,
Though once I deem'd thy lovely flower
The best of all the year.

"Adieu, to every other gem
That blooms in summer's hour !

I court a weed whose rougher stem
Yet bears a brilliant flower.

“Be thine, red Poppy, now the lay;
Be thou my willing theme;
For thou hast soothed my sickly day
With many a happy dream;

“Hast stolen away the canker grief,
And bidden moments cease
That seem’d too sad to hope relief,
Till thou hast brought me peace.

“Even pain before thy power has fled;
The eye, unclosed before,
Has shut in sleep, so deep and dead,
As though ’twould wake no more.

“These are thy potent charming powers;
For these I love thee then,
Thou worst of weeds, thou best of flowers,
Thou foe and friend of men.

“For though thy soothings are divine
When man but seeks thy use,
Yet sometimes madness may incline
To deep and dire abuse.

“His own or else another’s life
Before thy power may fall;
Murderous, or suicidal strife
For punishment must call.

“And yet thy benefits, bright weed,
Are more than all thy harm;
Hail then, red Poppy! take thy meed;
I own thy powerful charm.

“Still soften wretchedness and pain;
Still give those dreamy hours,
That seem like health returned again,
Thou best of nature’s flowers.”

THE WILLOW.

Class, Diocia. Order, Diandria. N. O., Amentaceæ.

The various kinds of Willows and Osiers are divided into upwards of seventy species, and the varieties are likewise numerous ; they are arranged under twenty sub-orders or divisions, to facilitate the botanist in ascertaining their names. The Willows are the most difficult plants a botanist has to examine, as some of the species so closely resemble each other, that without the assistance of plates, the student is often in doubt ; indeed, so variable at different periods of their growth, and closely allied are some of the species, that even professors themselves are often perplexed. The favorite places of growth of most of the species are moist woods or river sides, but some delight in dry mountains.

“Near the moist brink
Of music loving streams they ever keep,
And often in the lucid fountains peep,
Oft laughing drink
Of the mad torrent’s spray, perched near the thunder-
ing steep.”

These plants vary in size. The important uses rendered by the different species of the Willow serve to rank them among the list of economical plants. The larger kinds yield timber, and exceed sixty feet in height, whilst the least of them which grows on the Highland mountains can scarcely be said to rise above the surface of the soil in which it vegetates. Some are extensively used for crates, hoops, and baskets, and the species Bedford Willow, (*Salix Russelliana*,) is an extremely valuable tree, and was first brought into notice by the late Duke of Bedford. Sir William Jackson Hooker in his British Flora, writes, "It was one of this species, the favorite tree of Dr. Johnson, at Litchfield, which was a few years since destroyed by a hurricane after it had attained the height of sixty feet, and a girth of thirteen feet. So important is it as a plantation tree, that Mr. Lowe, in his survey of the county of Notts, states, that at eight year's growth, the poles yielded a net profit of £ 214 per acre. The late George Biggin, Esq., of Cosgrove Priory, an able chemist, ascertained that the bark of this tree contains the tanning principle in a superior degree to that of the oak." It is likewise used as a substitute for Peruvian bark.

"From the first bud whose verdant head
The winter's lingering tempest braves,
To those, which 'mid the foliage dead,
Shrink latest to their annual graves ;

All are for use, for health, for pleasure given,
All speak, in various ways, the bounteous hand of
Heaven."

The woolly broad leaved Willow (*Salix la-
"ata*) grows on the Scottish mountains about
three feet in height, and may be reckoned among
the handsomest of the genus. This species Wah-
lanberg considers the most beautiful in Sweden,
if not in the whole world. "The splendid golden
catkins," he observes, "at the ends of the young
branches, light as it were the whole shrub, and are
accompanied by the tender foliage sparkling with
gold and silver." The Weeping Willow (*Salix
Babylonica*) is not indigenous to this country, but
is a native of the Levant. In the Psalms of David
the captive children of Israel are represented as
hanging their harps upon these Willows, and
sitting down beside the waters of Babylon to weep
their separation from their dear country.

" Silent their harps, each chord unstrung,
On pendant willow branches hung."

BOOKER.

" On the willow thy harp is suspended,
O Salem ! its sound should be free ;
And the hour when thy glories are ended,
But left me that token of thee :
And ne'er shall its soft notes be blended
With the voice of the spoiler by me."

BYRON.

Our earliest poets represented forsaken lovers as wearing wreaths of the Willow ; Brayton sings,

“ In love the sad forsaken wight
The Willow garland weareth.”

Shakspeare alludes to it in several passages thus :

“ I'll wear a Willow garland for his sake.”

And in the Merchant of Venice, Lorenza exclaims,

“ In such a night
Stood Dido with a *willow* in her hand,
Upon the wild sea banks, and waved her love
To come again to Carthage.”

and again in his description of Ophelia's drowning place :

“ There is a *willow* grows ascaunt the brook,
That shows its hoar leaves in the glassy stream,
There with fantastic garlands did she come.”

The Willow is the emblem of Beneficence, and justly may it be termed so, for the root, stalk, and flower, are all beneficent to man, and syrup and ointments are made from its juices.

THE COMMON TRAVELLER'S JOY

(Clematis vitalba).

Class, Polyandria. Order, Polygynia. N. O., Ranunculaceæ.

Takes its name from *Clema*, a vine shoot, which the branches much resemble. It is a twining shrub, running over the tops of the hedges, and is very abundant in some of our woods, where their long and flexible shoots thickly interlace the branches of the trees.

“The Clematis, the favoured flower,
Which boasts the name of Virgin’s bower,”

has pinnated leaves, with heart-shaped leaflets, and twining leaf-stalks ; the stem is angular, woody, and climbing, and the panicle or flower bunches are axillar, or spring from the foot of the leaf-stalk, as well as terminal. The flowers are sweet scented and of a yellowish white colour, composed of four petals externally downy, and the seeds, which are numerous, have a long feathery and silky tail, into which the styles are converted : these gay festoons, with their light and negligent air, have a very pretty effect. When strolling along a part of the country, visited for the first time, we are often led with eager eyes to seek for such flowers as we

remember to have seen in other parts, with which we are familiar ; such has been our feeling with regard to the Clematis, when wandering in a more northern part of this island ; but the search was in vain, and this plant, which we see wreathing its flowered branches so often around us in our native county, was nowhere to be caught sight of.

“ Full oft my gladden’d eye
In pleasant glade, or river’s marge has traced,
(As if there planted by the hand of taste,)
Sweet flowers of every dye.

“ But never did I see
In mead, or mountain, or domestic bower,
’Mong many a lovely and delicious flower,
One half so fair as thee !

“ Thy beauty makes rejoice
My inmost heart—I know not how ’tis so,—
Quick coming fancies thou dost make me know,
For fragrance is thy voice.

“ And still it comes to me,
In quiet night, and turmoil of the day,
Like memory of friends gone far away,
Or, haply ceased to be.

“ Together we’ll commune,
As lovers do, when standing all apart
No one o’er-hears the whispers of their heart,
Save the all-silent moon.

“ Thy thoughts I can divine,
Although not uttered in vernacular words,
Thou me remind’st of songs of forest birds ;
Of venerable wine.

"Of earth's fresh shrubs and roots;
Of summer days, when men their thirsting slake
In the cool fountain, or the cooler lake,
While eating wood-grown fruits.

"Thy leaves my memory tell
Of sights and scents, and sounds, that come again
Like ocean's murmurs, when the balmy strain
Is echoed in its shell.

"The meadows in their green,
Smooth running waters in the far off ways,
The deep-voiced forest where the hermit prays,
In thy fair face are seen.

"Thy home is in the wild,
'Mong sylvan shades, near music-haunted springs,
Where peace dwells all apart from earthly things,
Like some secluded child.

"The beauty of the sky,
The music of the woods, the love that stirs,
Wherever Nature charms her worshippers,
Are all by thee brought nigh.

"I shall not soon forget
What thou hast taught me in my solitude,
My feelings have acquired a taste for good,
Sweet flower! since first we met.

"Thou bring'st unto the soul
A blessing and a peace, inspiring thought;
And dost the goodness and the power denote
Of Him who formed the whole."

THE COMMON MOUSE-EAR HAWK-WEED.

(Hieracium Pilosella.)

Class, Syngenesia. Order, Polygamia equalis. N. O.,
Compositæ.

It belongs to one of the most extensive and natural of all the families of plants ; and is classed in the same tribe as the Dandelion, which we have before noticed. It is a compound flower, having a number of florets with ligulate or strap-shaped corollas attached to a tube which contains stamens and pistils, the flowers are inserted on a broad receptacle, and surrounded by an involucre. It is included in the tribe Cichoraceæ, to which the following genera belong, viz. Goatsbeard, Ox-tongue, Picris, Hawkbit, Thrincia, Cat's-ear, Lettuce, Sowthistle, Hawksbeard, Borkhausia, Dandelion, Nipple Wort, and Succory.

The Common Mouse-ear Hawkweed grows like the dandelion, singly on a leafless stalk ; the leaves spread on the ground, in form they are between elliptical and lance-shaped, the edges entire, white, and downy beneath with creeping scyons. The blossom is of a pale lemon colour, it grows on banks and dry pastures, and may be readily distinguished from the others of the same tribe by its

creeping scyons. There are several other species of Hawkweed, but the most common is the Wood one, (*H. sylvaticum*.) They close up their petals like all the plants in this tribe, at certain hours of the day ; therefore

“In every copse and sheltered dell,
Unveil'd to the observant eye,
Are faithful monitors who tell
How pass the hours and seasons by.

“The green robed children of the spring
Will mark the periods as they pass,
Mingle with leaves Time's feathered wing,
And bind with flowers his silent glass.

“Mark where transparent waters glide,
Soft flowing o'er their tranquil bed,
There cradled on the dimpling tide
Nymphææ * rests her lovely head.

“But conscious of the earliest beam,
She rises from her humid nest,
And sees reflected in the stream
The virgin whiteness of her breast.

“Till the bright day-star to the west,
Declines in ocean's surge to lave,
Then folded in her modest vest,
She slumbers on the rocking wave.

“See Hieracium's various tribe
Of plummy seed and radiate flowers,
The course of time their blooms describe,
And wake or sleep appointed hours.

* White Water Lily.

“Broad o’er its imbricated cup,
The Goatsbeard spreads his golden rays,
But shuts its golden petals up,
Retreating from the noontide blaze.

“Pale as a pensive cloister’d nun,
The Beth’lem star her face unveils,
When o’er the mountain peers the sun,
And shades it from the vesper gales.

“Among the loose and arid sands
The humble *Arenaria* creeps,
Slowly the purple star expands,
But soon within its calyx sleeps.

“And those small bells so lightly ray’d
With young *Aurora*’s rosy hue,
Are to the noontide sun display’d,
And shut their plaits against the dew.

“On upland slopes the shepherds mark
The hour when as the dial true,
Cichorium to the towering lark
Lifts her soft eyes serenely blue.

“And thou ‘wee crimson tipped flower,’
Gatherest thy fringed mantles round
Thy bosom at the closing hour,
When night drops bathe the turfy ground.”

THE BUCKBEAN.

(Menyanthes trifoliata).

Class, Pentandria. Order, Monogynia. N. O., Gentianææ.

This delicately flowered plant is generally found in moist and boggy ground, it has creeping and matted roots, and the leaves are divided into three leaflets, very similar in shape to the clover, sheathing at the base ; a flower stalk rises from the centre, from four to six inches in length, supporting a bunch of white blossoms, a roseate hue colours the underside of these beauteous flowers, while a delicate tuft of fibres rises out of their alabaster cups, giving the appearance of beautiful fringe. The flower cup consists of five deeply divided segments, egg-shaped, pointed, veined externally, and bent back.

The blossoms soon fade and put on a yellowish brown appearance after they are gathered, admonishing us of the frailty of human existence.

“ As vanishes the fleeting shade,
As flowers before the evening fade,
Such is the life of feeble man,
His days are measured by a span.”

FAWCETT.

Thus advised let us seize the present opportu-

nity to examine and enjoy our lives ; let not the time pass by without reflecting on our manner of life ; let us work diligently for our own good as well as that of our fellow creatures, that we may have pleasing remembrances to console and cheer us at its close.

“ If *bliss* be a frail and perishing flower
Born only to decay,
Oh ! who, when it blooms but a single hour,
Would fling its sweets away.”

The Buckbean is also known by the name of Marsh Trefoil. Many lovers of nature who spend much of their time in taking walks into the country, but who prefer the more pleasant rambles in the dry meadows, are unacquainted with the lovely blossoms of the Buckbean, for as before stated, it is only in boggy and moist situations that it can be discovered, with the *carex* and *rush* for its companions, it is sometimes found covering several acres.

THE DEADLY NIGHTSHADE.

(*Atropa Belladonna*.)

Class, Pentandria. Order, Monogynia. Nat. Ord.,
Solaneæ.

The family to which the *Atropa* belongs consists mostly of poisonous plants. The Deadly Night-

shade is to be found in thickets and hedges. The whole plant is of a lightish green colour, excepting the flowers, which are of a dull purple, and the berries which succeed them are of a rich black. The flowers are bell-shaped, larger than those of the harebell, and are placed singly on the stalks, arising from the axils of the leaves. The leaves are large, egg-shaped, and the odour of the whole plant, like the henbane (*Hyocyamus niger*), is nauseous and disagreeable, as if to warn us of their vonomous nature. The poison resides principally in the berries, which, from their resemblance to cherries, have often been eaten by children with fatal consequences: they are full of a pulpy matter of a sweetish taste, and of narcotic properties. The leaves are sometimes employed externally, are cooling and softening; and are considered good against the ringwown and hard swellings.

We have another wild plant that is known by the name of Woody Nightshade, (*Solanum Dulcamara*). We frequently see it trailing about our hedges in moist situations, the stems are climbing and shrubby without thorns; the leaves are heart-shaped, the upper ones approaching to halbert shape. The flowers are inserted opposite to the leaves, drooping, purple, with two tubercles at the bottom of each segment; the anthers are large, yellow, and united into a pyramidal form; and altogether the blossom very much resembles

that of the potatoe, to which it is nearly allied. It has none of the deadly properties of the former, and is often used in medicine in rustic practice.

THE PIMPERNEL.

Class, Pentandria. Order, Monogynia. Nat. Ord.,
Primulaceæ.

The bog Pimpernel, (*Anagallis tenella*) is one of the most delicate and lively looking blossoms in the British Flora; it is found as implied by its name in marshy ground. *Anagallis* signifies laughter, and alludes to the medicinal properties of some of the species, which were formerly supposed to cheer the spirits by removing obstructions of the liver. The stems of this little plant are thread-like, creeping, and about three inches in length, the leaves are small, egg-shaped or roundish; the flowers are of a pretty pink colour, and large in proportion to the size of the plant.

The Corn Pimpernel (*Anagallis arvensis*) is a merry little flower often seen in corn fields, and opening its bright scarlet petals to the sun, but closing them again whenever a cloud interposes between it and the ray it loves, and has hence acquired the name of the "Poor Man's Weather-glass," by thus giving notice of the approach of rain.

This apparent instinct in the plant has called

forth some pretty verses ; in the " Moral of Flowers" we find the following ;

" Of humble growth, though brighter dyes,
But not by rural swains less prized,
The trailing stems allure,
Of Pimpernel, whose brilliant flower
Closes against the approaching shower,
Warning the swain to sheltering bower,
From humid air secure."

Miss Twamley too has written the following pretty lines on this bright little blossom and the country girl.

" I'll go and peep at the Pimpernel,
And see if she thinks the clouds look well ;
For if the sun shine,
And 'tis like to be fine,
I shall go to the fair,
For my sweetheart is there ;
So Pimpernel, what bode the clouds and the sky ?
If fair weather, no maiden so happy as I.

" The Pimpernel flower had folded up
Her little gold star in her coral cup ;
And unto the maid
Thus her warning said :
' Though the sun smile down
There's a gathering frown
O'er the checker'd blue of the clouded sky,
So tarry at home for a storm is nigh.'

" The maid first look'd sad, and then look'd cross,
Gave her foot a fling, and her head a toss ;

‘ Say you so indeed,
You mean little weed ?
You’re shut up in spite,
For the blue sky is bright ;
To more credulous people your warnings tell,
I’ll away to the fair—good day, Pimpernel !’

“ ‘ Stay at home,’ quoth the flower ; ‘ in troth not I,
I’ll don my straw hat with a silken tie ;
O’er my neck so fair,
I’ll a kerchief wear,
White checker’d with pink ;
And then—let me think !

I’ll consider my gown—for I’d fain look well ;’
So saying, she stepped o’er the Pimpernel.

“ Now the wise little flower wrapped safe from harm,
Sat fearlessly waiting the coming storm ;
Just peeping between
In her snug cloak of green,
Lay folded up tight
Her red robe so bright,
Though broidered with purple and starred with gold,
No eye might its bravery then behold.

“ The fair maiden straight donned her best array,
And forth to the festival hied away ;
But scarce had she gone,
Ere the storm came on,
And mid thunder and rain,
She cried oft and again :

‘ Oh ! would I had minded yon boding flower,
And were safe at home from the pelting shower.’

“ Now maidens, the tale that I tell would say,
Don’t don fine clothes on a doubtful day !
Nor ask advice, when, like many more,
Your resolve was taken some time before.”

The leaves of the Pimpernel are egg-shaped, thickly and beautifully covered with dots on the under side; the corolla is bright scarlet, with a violet coloured eye, it consists of one piece and is wheel shaped. The blossoms are sometimes lilac colour, the seed pod is globular, splitting cross-way into two equal divisions.

THE FOXGLOVE.

(*Digitalis purpurea.*)

Class, Didynamia. Order, Angiospermia. Nat. Ord.,
Scrophularineæ.

It is a beautiful ornament to our hedge-rows, coppices, and waste places. In some counties it is very plentiful, whilst in others it is rarely to be seen, except in gardens.

“How beautiful the Foxglove blooms with purple
bells,

Upon the grassy banks of rustic ways,
Or on the sloping sides of sunny dells,
Which Flora with her treasures rich arrays.”

It is a flower we cannot pass without admiring, for of all our native herbaceous plants it is the most beautiful and stately in its appearance. Its stem grows to the height of three feet, and nearly from bottom to top is hung with purple bells:

the segments of the calyx are egg-shaped, acute ; the leaves are situated alternately on the stem, wrinkled and veined, and the blossom is beautifully spotted in the inside. The plant takes its name from *digitabulum*, a thimble. Throughout hilly and rocky counties and sub-alpine districts this flower blooms on road sides and waste land. It is very common in Monmouthshire, where varieties with white blossoms are sometimes found. It is found in Yorkshire, and is a favourite flower in Devonshire, but is not often met with in eastern parts.

“ Upon the sunny bank
The Foxglove rears its pyramid of bells,
Gloriously freckled, purpled and white, the flower
That cheers Devonian's fields, and by its side
Another, that, in her maternal clime
Scarce shuts its eye on Austral suns, and wakes
And smiles on Winter oft :—the primrose, hail'd
By all who live.”

The Foxglove has long been a famous remedy in many disorders, and it is equally famed for the dangerous effects which have arisen from its incautious use, it is therefore necessary that its properties should be known ; and we may say with the friend of Damon,

“ Thou shalt cull me simples, and shall teach
Thy friend the name and healing powers of each,
From the tall blue bell to the dwarfish weed,
What the dry land, and what the marshes feed.”

It has a bitter, nauseous, and virulent flavour : In medicine it is generally used in the form of a tincture, and possesses the power of suddenly reducing the pulse, which in many disorders is necessary for the safety of the patient.

THE MONKSWOOD OR WOLFSBANE.

(*Aconitum napellus*.)

Class, Polyandria. Order, Pentagynia. N. O., Ranunculaceæ.

Most of the species of Aconite are considered poisonous. The ancients had so great a fear of its fatal effects, that they would not touch the plants ; and hence many superstitious cautions arose as to the manner of gathering them. They pretended to have a method of preparing the poison so that it should not destroy its victim until the expiration of two years. We have only the species above named growing wild ; it bears a singular formed blossom, of dark blue colour, and in shape resembles a man's head with a helmet on ; the leaves are wedge shaped, much cut into divisions, and each blossom is divided into five irregular pieces. Bowring alludes to the poisonous properties of the Monkswood in the following lines :

“ And such is man—a soil that breeds
Or sweetest flowers, or vilest weeds ;

Flowers, lovely as the morning's light,
Weeds, deadly as the Aconite."

This plant, on account of its stately growth and the beauty of its blossom, often finds a place in the garden, and is a great ornament to our shrubberies, as it will grow under the drip of trees, and in places where other plants will not flourish. Its native countries are the woody regions of Germany, France, and Switzerland; but it has been introduced into Eng^d many years since, and is now found undoubtedly wild in many localities, especially on the banks of the river Teme in Herefordshire, and in great abundance by the sides of some of the brooks and rivulets in Monmouthshire, by the side of a stream at Ford, Somersetshire, and also in Devonshire and Cornwall.

Owing to its common cultivation the Monkswood often produces baneful effects on children, who unwittingly chew the flowers or leaves, for every part of the plant is poisonous, although the root is unquestionably the most so. On being chewed it first excites a slight sensation of acrimony, and afterwards a numbness at the tip of the tongue, and a burning sensation in other parts of the mouth, accompanied with shiverings. The juice applied to a wound produces very serious symptoms. This plant has had the name of Wolfsbane applied to it on account of the fatal effects of the root on many of the lower animals. The ancients considered this plant to have been invented by

Hecate, who formed it out of the foam of Cerberus, when dragged from the lower regions by Hercules, as we find by the following lines :

“ And now arrives unknown, *Ægeus’* seed,
Who great in name, had two-sea’d isthmus freed ;
Whose undeserved ruin *Media* sought,
By mortal *Aconite*, from *Scythia* brought ;
This from the *Echidnean* dog dire essence draws,
There is a blind steep cave, with foggy jaws,
Through which the bold *Tyrinthian* hero strained,
Dragged *Cerberus* with adamant enchain’d ;
Who backward hung, and scowling looked askew
On glorious day, with anger rabid grew ;
Three howls, three barks, at once with his three heads,
And in the grass his foaming poison sheds :
This sprung, attracting from the fruitful soil
Dire nourishment, and power of deathful spoil.
The rural swains, because it takes delight
In barren rocks, surnamed it *Aconite*.”

The deleterious effects of the Monkswood have not prevented its use in medicine, and the skill of the physician has been able to apply it in various ways ; but as with all other virulent agents, the greatest care is requisite in its application. It should be administered in very small doses, and under the direction of a skilful hand. It is generally used in cases of rheumatism.

BLACKBERRY.

(Rubus fruticosus).

Class, Icosandria. Order, Polygynia. N. O., Rosaceæ.

At this season the hedges are thickly covered with the blossoms of the various kinds of briars, and amongst the number the following species are the most common. The Wild Raspberry, (*Rubus idæus*), in woods; and the Hazle-leaved Bramble, (*R. corylifolius*); Dewberry, (*R. cæsius*); and the Blackberry, which is very common in hedges and thickets; all these species are too well known to need description.

The Blackberry is often made into a jam, which is considered very wholesome, and

“ Thy fruit full well the school-boy knows,
Wild bramble of the brake !
Go, put thou forth thy small white rose:
I love it for his sake.

“ Though woodbines flaunt and roses glow
O'er all the fragrant bowers,
Thou need'st not be ashamed to show
Thy satin-threaded flowers;

“ For dull the eye, the heart is dull,
That cannot feel how fair,
Amid all beauty beautiful,
Thy tender blossoms are !

"How delicate thy gauzy frill !
How rich thy branchy stem !
How soft thy voice when woods are still,
And thou sing'st hymns to them !

"While silent flowers are falling slow,
And 'mid the general hush,
A sweet air lifts the little bough,
Lone whispering through the bush !

"The primrose to the grave is gone ;
The hawthorn flower is dead ;
The violet by the mossed grey stone
Hath laid her weary head !

"But thou, wild bramble ! back dost bring
In all their beauteous power
The fresh green days of life's young spring,
And boyhood's blossoming hour.

"Scorn'd bramble of the brake ! once more
Thou bidd'st me be a boy,
To gad with thee the woodlands o'er,
In freedom and in joy."

ELLIOTT.

The following plants should be sought after in this month : being rather uncommon :

The Common Meadow Rue, (*Thalictrum flavum* ;) on banks of ditches. Mountain Globe Flower, (*Trollius Europæus* ;) moist land. Field Larkspur, (*Delphinium Consolida* ;) rare ; Kent, Suffolk, and Cambridge. Long Prickly Headed Poppy, (*Papaver argemone* ;) in corn fields. White Climbing Corydalis, (*Corydalis clavicular-*

ta;) bushy places and walls, gravelly soil. Purple Sea Rocket, (*Cakile maritima*;) sandy sea coasts. Annual Cress Rocket, (*Vella annua*;) sandy pastures; Salisbury plain. Whitlow Pepperwort, (*Lepidium Draba*;) rare; fields; Swansea. Alpine Penny Cress, (*Thlaspi alpestre*;) mountains; Yorkshire, Derbyshire, Carnarvon. Hare's ear Treacle Mustard, (*Erysimum orientale*;) rocky places near the sea. Shrubby Base Rocket, (*Reseda fruticulosa*;) Somersetshire, and near Liverpool. Ledum Leaved Rock Rose (*Helianthemum ledifolium*;) very rare; Somersetshire. English Catchfly, (*Silene Anglica*;) gravelly fields, Surrey and Hertford. Variegated Catchfly, (*Silene quinquevulnera*;) sandy fields, Kent, Croydon. Nottingham Catchfly, (*Silene nutans*;) chalky cliffs; Carnarvonshire, and Yorkshire. Italian Catchfly, (*Silene Italica*;) cliffs at Dover. Many stalked Stitchwort, (*Stellaria scapigera*;) hills of Scotland. Fine leaved Sandwort (*Arenaria tennifolia*;) sandy fields; Cambridge, Oxford. Perennial Blue Flax, (*Linum perenne*;) chalky hills; Norfolk, Suffolk, Westmoreland. Hispid Marsh Mallow, (*Althæa hirsuta*;) rare; fields and waste places. Wood Cranesbill, (*Geranium sylvaticum*;) woods and thickets in sub-alpine counties. Mountain Cranesbill (*Geranium Pyrenaicum*;) meadows and pastures. Hemlock Stork's bill (*Erodium cicutarium*;) waste ground. Musky Stork's Bill, (*Erodium moscha-*

tum); rare; mountainous pastures. Sea Stork's Bill, (*Erodium maritimum*); rare; sea coasts, Wales, Cornwall, Bristol. Common Bladderwort, (*Staphylea pinnata*;) thickets and hedges; Yorkshire. Bird's foot Trefoil, (*Trifolium ornithopodioides*;) sandy pastures. Hairy Mountain Oxytropis, (*Oxytropis Ura'ensis*;) dry pastures; Scotland. Rough podded Yellow Vetch, (*Vicia lutea*;) rocky and stony ground. Hairy flowered Yellow Vetch, (*Vicia hybrida*;) Glastonbury, near Lincoln. Yellow Vetchling, (*Lathyrus Aphaca*;) rare, sandy and gravelly fields. Black Bitter Vetch, (*Orobis niger*;) shaded rocks; Scotland. Upright Bramble, (*Rubus suberectus*;) boggy heaths in the north. Shrubby Cinquefoil, (*Potentilla fruticosa*;) rare; rocky places. Strawberry flowered Cinquefoil, (*P. rupestris*;) very rare; Montgomeryshire. Orange Alpine Cinquefoil (*Potentilla Alpestris*;) mountains; north of England, Wales. Cinnamon Rose, (*Rosa cinnamomea*;) Yorkshire. Sabine's Rose, (*Rosa Sabini*;) North of England, Sussex, Warwickshire. Common Mare's Tail, (*Hippurus vulgaris*;) ditches and stagnant water. English Stonecrop, (*Sedum Anglicum*;) rocky places near the sea; Wales. Rose Root, (*Rhodiola rosea*;) wet rocks; North of England. London Pride Saxifrage, (*Saxifraga umbrosa*;) Ireland, Yorkshire, Scotland. Starry Saxifrage, (*Saxifraga stellaris*;) rivulet banks; North of Eng-

land. Tuberous Caraway, (*Carum Bulbocastanum*;) fields, Hertfordshire, Cambridgeshire. Baldmoney, (*Meum athamanticum*;) dry alpine pastures in England. Upright Bedstraw, (*Galium erectum*;) hedges and pastures. Rough Hawksbeard, (*Crepis biennis*;) chalky pastures; Kent, Suffolk. Marsh Fleawort, (*Cineraria palustris*;) near pools; Norfolk, and Cambridge. Spiked Rampion, (*Phyteuma spicatum*;) woods and thickets, Sussex. Ciliated Heath, (*Erica ciliaris*;) boggy ground; frequent in Cornwall. Marsh Andromeda, (*Andromeda polifolia*;) peat bogs, Norfolk, North of England. Purple Gromwell, (*Lithospermum purpureo-cæruleum*;) thickets in Wales, Glamorganshire, Devon, Somerset. Common Flowering Rush, (*Butomus umbellatus*;) pools and ditches.

JULY.

“First April, she with mellow showers,
Opens the way for early flowers ;
Then after her comes smiling May
In a more rich and sweet array ;
Next enters June, and brings us more
Gems than those two that were before :
Then lastly July comes, and she
More wealth brings in than all those three.”

HERRICK.

THE name of the month is derived from Julius. The Saxons called it *Hew monath*, or the season of hay harvest. The season which we have so long anticipated is now arrived. Summer is come among us, and the warmest and richest portion of the year is felt and seen to be present with us.

The great proportion of our meadows however is cleared by the mower's scythe, and instead of the richly variegated crop they a short time since exhibited, are now beginning to shine anew in the livery of emerald green. The hills and plains are also changing their Spring attire for the more sober garb of the ripening year, and the foliage of the woods have now become darker in their hue, and

more impervious to the rays of the sun ; and how delightful is the shade afforded by the “ umbrageous multitude of leaves ;” how delightful the stillness, the peace which nature breathes ! how soft and sweet the sounds of the

“ Ring-dove’s plaint,
Moan’d from the twilight centre of the grove,
While every other woodland lay is mute,
Save when the wren flits from her down coved nest,
And from the root-sprigs trills her ditty clear,—
The grasshopper’s oft pausing chirp—the buzz
Angrily shrill of moss-entangled bee
That soon as loos’d, booms with full twang away.”

The advancing year has deprived us of many of the flowers of the preceding month, but a new generation has sprung up to supply their places. The beautiful willow herb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), with its crimson blossoms, adorns the margins of the streams, growing up and towering above the rushes and yellow Water Iris, (*Iris pseudacorus* ;) while reposing upon the bosom of the water we see that most elegant of flowers the white Water Lily, (*Nymphaea alba*,) beautiful when first budding among its floating leaves, and still more lovely when its snowy petals are half expanded or fully opened to the sun,

“ O ! beautiful thou art,
Thou sculpture-like and stately river queen,
Crowning the depths as with the light serene
Of a pure heart !

“Bright lily of the wave !
Rising in fearless grace with every swell,
Thou seem'st as if a spirit meekly brave
Dwelt in thy cell.”

Although the hedge rows have been bereaved of their clusters of blossoming May, they are still attractive with the wreaths and showy white cups of the great Bindweed, (*Convolvulus sepium*), and with the feathery garlands of the Clematis or Virgin's bower. Beneath these gay festoons perchance the Foxglove hangs its spotted bells, and the tall Mullein shoots up its yellow lance ; there too, the yellow and white Bedstraws bend their weak forms as if sinking beneath the weight of their myriads of fairy blossoms, and there hang the low weeping flowers of the Enchanter's Nightshade, (*Circœa lutetiana*), accompanied by the spreading panicles of the Bellflower (*Campanula patula*), and

“The lovely flowers that deck the earth, how eloquent are they !
What lessons to the human heart they smilingly convey ;
And yet how prone are we to pass their pure monitions by,
Gazing with listlessness of heart and unobservant eye !

“To childhood are they not as hopes, which fascinate the mind,
And lead the footsteps gaily on with purpose ever kind ?

To manhood, are they not as joys that gild a summer
day,
And emblems of his bosom's pride, which shortly must
decay ?

"To age, the gay remembrancers of what was seen
and known
When love was budding in the breast for one, and
one alone ?
To each they were affection's pledge, and strengthen'd
kindred ties,—
Gave more of vigour to the pulse, and brightness to
the eyes.

"Who loves not flowers must have a heart of uncon-
genial soil;
Go view the Lilies of the vale, that 'neither spin nor
toil,'
E'en Solomon in all his pride was not array'd like
these
Meek dwellers in their loneliness, perfuming every
breeze.

"There's odours in their very name, which to the
thoughtful brain,
Comes with refreshing influence, like April's pleasant
rain;
The Rose that to the sun's warm kiss uplifts its blush-
ing cheek,
Is but a rainbow type of life, departing whilst we
speak."

PRIDEUX.

Besides the Blue Bottle, (*Centaurea cyanus*),
and the Corn Marigold, (*Chrysanthemum sege-
tum*), the corn fields now display the flaunting

Poppy and the Corn Cockle (*Argostemma Githago*,) as well as many a beautiful flower of humbler growth, such as the Pimpernel, that surprises us with the brilliancy of its colour, and the delicate touches which a close examination enables us to discover in its tiny blossoms. In the green lanes how many more of these beautiful productions arrest our attention; here our senses are regaled with the fine odour of the Meadow Sweet, (*Spiræa ulmaria*,) and the lingering perfume of the Honeysuckle. On the dry banks of our roads rise the elegant clusters of pink flowers which distinguish the Centaury (*Erythræa Centaurium*,) and the yellow star-like blossoms of the Yellow Wort, (*Chlora perfoliata*,) on our heaths the wild Thyme gives out its sweet perfume; and the Harebell waves its delicate bells.

FERNs,

Now display their beautiful folige on our moist banks, old walls, and shady woods. They belong to the Acotyledonous or cellular class of plants, and reproduce themselves by spores or germs. The different genera of Ferns are principally distinguished by the situation of the sori or dusty globules or streaks on the back of the fronds; some are branching, others running up each side of the rib in the middle, and others are in horizontal lines. The spores are very minute. The

Blunt Shield Fern (*Aspidium Filix mas*), which we find so frequently in woods, is particularly attractive. The fronds rise up in a circle, and have the appearance of a deep hexagonal basket. The Black stalked Spleenwort (*Asplenium Adiantum nigrum*), which grows on old walls and in fissures of rocks is another beautiful species, and even the Fern of our heaths, the Common Brake (*Pteris aquilina*), is well worthy observation.

“The wild buck bells from ferny brake,”

says the poet, for among this Fern is the favorite haunt of the deer. It is an exceedingly light and pretty species, and

“At the least stir of the inconstant breeze
Bends its light plume.”

This Fern is much used for thatching cottages, and as litter for cattle.

ST. JOHN'S WORT.

(*Hypericum*).

Class, Polyadelphia. Order, Polyandria. N. O., Hypericineæ.

We have twelve different species of St. John's Wort, and all of them, with the exception of the large flowered, (*Hypericum calycinum*), are very

frequently found wild ; the latter, on account of its beauty, we often see cultivated in shrubberies. The square stalked St. John's Wort (*H. quadrangulum*) is a pretty plant growing in moist pastures ; the panicles are terminal, and the leaves are covered with black dots, and, as the name denotes, has a square stem. The common perforated St. John's Wort, (*H. perforatum*) has a two edged stem, and there are minute black dots on the tips of the flowers, the calyx, and the leaves ; the profusion of its yellow blossoms has caused it to be spoken of as the

“Hypericum, all bloom, so thick a swarm
Of flowers, like flies, clothing its slender rods,
That scarce a leaf appears.”

It is commemorated by physicians and poets in allusion to its healing properties as

“Balm of the warrior's wound.”

This plant boiled in wine and drunk is said to heal inward hurts, bruises, and spitting of blood ; made into an ointment it opens obstructions, dissolves swellings, and closes up wounds ; and the oil of St. John's Wort is sold by chemists. There is a superstition attached to this plant, as may be gleaned from the following lines :

“The young maid stole through the cottage door,
And blushed as she sought the plant of power ;
‘Thou silver glow-worm, oh ! lend me thy light,
I must gather the mystic St. John's Wort to-night--

The wonderful herb, whose leaf shall decide
If the coming year shall make me a bride !'
 And the glow-worm came
 With its silvery flame,
 And sparkled and shone
 Through the night of St. John ;
And soon as the young maid her love-knot tied,
 With noiseless tread
 To her chamber she sped,
Where the spectral moon her white beams shed ;
' Bloom here, bloom here, thou plant of power,
To deck the young bride, in her bridal hour !'
But it drooped its head, that plant of power,
And died the mute death of the voiceless flower ;
And a withered leaf on the ground it lay,
More meet for a burial than a bridal day.

" And when a year was pass'd away,
All pale on her bier the young maid lay ;
 And the glow-worm came
 With its silvery flame,
 And sparkled and shone
 Through the night of St. John
As they closed the cold grave o'er the maiden's clay."

The trailing St. John's Wort (*H. humifusum*) is a weak plant, trailing on gravelly heaths, the pellucid black dots are present on this as in most of the other species. The Marsh species, (*H. elodes*), is found in boggy places, and the upright St. John's Wort (*H. pulchrum*), which is the prettiest plant of them all, grows on heaths and dry waste places ; the flowers are bright yellow tipped with red before expansion, the anthers are

red, stems from one to two feet high, bearing the blossoms in a panicle, slender, erect, and rigid; the whole plant is smooth, and the blossoms like the calyx are fringed with black glands. The flowers of all the species are yellow.

THE ROCK ROSE.

(*Helianthemum*.)

Class, Polyandria. Order, Monogynia. N. O., Cistineæ.

Of the five species of the Rock Rose, the white mountain, the hoary dwarf, and spotted annual, are but rarely found except in some few localities in Somersetshire, Surrey, Lancashire, and Jersey.

The Common Rock Rose, (*Helianthemum vulgare*) in some districts is plentifully scattered in dry pastures and rocky and calcareous places. It is procumbent and shrubby, the leaves are egg-shaped or oblong, and are seated opposite on the stalk; the flowers are pale yellow. In barren places it beautifies the patches of withered herbage with its golden blossoms, and gives an air of sunshine and gaiety to the barren rock. If you take a piece of wire or pig's bristle and irritate any of the stamens, which are in sets, you will observe them fall back from the pistil, illustrating a very pretty example of vegetable irritability, little less

striking than that of the sensitive plant. On the Bannagor crags, and on the summit of Windcliff, Monmouthshire, tourists often find abundance of these flowers.

“ Where thou, sweet Cystus, dost so meekly creep,
Fragile and delicate, whose life's a day,
Drinking of amber sunbeams madly deep,
To bloom and die !
To think that thou must fade so soon away,
It makes one sigh.”

THE YELLOW GOATSBEARD,

(*Tragopogon pratensis*),

Belongs to the same class, order, and natural family as the Dandelion. The whole plant is smooth and abounding with milky juice; it grows about eighteen inches high, and is usually found in hay-fields among the high grass; the stem is leafy, the leaves are narrow, pointed and channelled; the plant is named from *tragos*, a goat, and *pogon*, a beard, from the beautiful bearded seed. This flower, like the Oxtongue, Lettuce, Hawkbit, Hawksbeard, and many compound flowers, closes at certain hours, but it generally opens later and closes earlier than most others. Linnæus formed a dial from observation of the hours of each flower opening and closing its blossoms: and Mrs. Hemans composed the following lines on the subject:

" 'Twas a lovely thought to mark the hours
As they floated in light away,
By the opening and the folding flowers
That laugh to the summer's day.

" Thus had each moment its own rich hue,
And its graceful cup and bell,
In whose coloured vase might sleep the dew,
Like the pearl in an Eastern shell.

" To such sweet signs might the time have flow'd,
In a golden current on,
Ere from the garden, man's first abode,
The glorious guests are gone.

" So might the days have been brightly told,
Those days of song and dreams,
When shepherds gathered their flocks of old,
By the blue Arcadian streams.

" So in those isles of delight, that rest
Far off in a breezeless main,
Which many a bark, with a weary quest
Hath sought, but still in vain.

" Yet is not life, in its real flight
Mark'd thus—even thus—on earth,
By the closing of one hope's delight,
And another's gentle birth?

" Oh let us live, so that flower by flower,
Shutting in turn might leave,
A lingerer yet for the sun-set hour,
A charm for the shaded eve."

In Loudon's Encyclopedia of Gardening, the periods of opening and closing of a number of

well known flowers is given, for helping those who wish to form a floral dial, but from our own observation we have reason to differ with regard to some of the flowers. The subjoined list will be found nearly correct in mild clear weather, although a different state of the atmosphere has been found to retard the opening of some of them. The observations were made during the months of June and July.

		Opens Morning.		Closes.	
		H.	M.	H.	M.
Dandelion	<i>Leontodon taraxacum</i>	5	15	12	30
Goatsbeard	<i>Tragopogon pratensis</i>	5	30	10	45
Hawkweed <i>Picris</i>	<i>Picris hieracioides</i>	4	30	12	0
Wild Succory	<i>Cichorium Intibus</i>	4	15	9	0
Field Bindweed	<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>	5	15	4	10
Common Nipplewort	<i>Lapsana communis</i>	5	10	10	45
Longrooted Cat'sear..	<i>Hypochoeris radiata</i>	6	15	4	15
Mouse-ear Hawkweed	<i>Hieracium pilosella</i>	8	0	2	30
Purple Sandwort	<i>Arenaria purpurea</i>	9	15	2	30
White Water Lily	<i>Nymphaea alba</i> ..	7	0	5	0
Chickweed	<i>Stellaria media</i> ..	9	0	9	0

EVENING PRIMROSE.

(Enothéra biennis.)

Class, Octandria. Order, Monogynia. N. O., Onagrarizæ.

Grows about two feet high, it has a stem somewhat hairy, the leaves are nearly lance-shaped, and the flowers are sitting on the stem, without a foot-stalk. It expands its pale yellow cup during the evening, when its perfume is exhaled.

“Fair flower! thou shunn’st the glare of day,
 Yet lov’st to open meekly bold,
 To evening hues of sober grey,
 Thy cup of paly gold.

“Be thine the offering, owing long
 To thee, and to this pensive hour,
 Of the bright tributary song,
 Though transient as thy flower.

“I love to watch at silent eve
 Thy scatter’d blossom’s lonely light;
 And have my inmost heart receive
 The influence of that sight.

“I love, at such an hour to mark
 Their beauty greet the light breeze chill,
 And shine, ’mid shadows gathering dark
 The garden’s glory still.

“For such, ’tis sweet to think the while
When cares and griefs the breast invade,
In Friendship’s animating smile,
In sorrow’s darkening shade.

“Thus it bursts forth like thy pale cup,
Glistening amid its dewy tears,
And bears the sinking spirit up
Amid its chilling fears ;

“But still more animating far,
If meek religion’s eye may trace
Even in the glimmering earth-born star,
The holier hope of grace !

“The hope that, as thy beauteous bloom
Expands to glad the close of day,
So through the shadows of the tomb
May break forth mercy’s ray.”

BARTON.

A great number of different species of œi othe-ra are cultivated in our gardens which have been introduced from America, and require but little attention in their cultivation, but the flower above spoken of is the only one that has been naturalized in this country. Some plants are so regular to their times of opening and closing that they vary but a few minutes throughout the year, but such is not the case with this plant. It usually opens about five o’ clock in the evening, but is affected by the state of the atmosphere. We have very few British night-blowing plants ; and Langhorne has composed the following lines on this flower ;

“There are that love the shades of life,
And shun the splendid walks of fame;
There are that hold it rueful strife,
To risk ambition’s losing game.

“That far from envy’s lurid eye,
The fairest fruits of genius rear,
Content to see them bloom and die,
In friendship’s small, but kindly sphere.

“Than vainer flowers, though sweeter far,
The Evening Primrose shuns the day,
Blooms only to the western star,
And loves its solitary ray.

“In Eden’s vale an aged hind,
At the dim twilight’s closing hour,
On his time-smoothed staff reclin’d,
With wonder viewed the opening flower.

“‘Ill fated flower, at eve to blow :’
(In pity’s simple thought he cried,)
Thy bosom must not feel the glow
Of splendid suns, or smiling skies.

“‘Nor there the vagrants of the field,
The hamlet’s little train, behold,
Their eyes to sweet oppression yield,
When thine the falling shades behold.

“‘Nor thee the hasty shepherd heeds,
When love has filled his heart with cares ;
For flowers he rifles all the meads ;
For waking flowers—but thine forbears.’ ”

The expansion of this flower is very remarkable;
the tips of the calyx are held together by little

hooks, and the calyx begins to open at the lower part, displaying the yellow corolla, which gradually enlarges, and it is sometimes more than half an hour before the flower bursts forth, which it ultimately does with a loud noise. The plant delights in a sandy soil, and is found wild in Warwickshire, Suffolk, and near Liverpool.

HEATH.

(*Erica*.)

Class, Octandria. Order, Monogynia. N. O., Ericaceæ.

“Where the wild bee comes with a murmuring hum,
Pilfering sweets as he roams along,
I uprear my purple bell;
Listening the free-born eagles cry,
Marking the heath-cock’s glancing eye,
On the mountain side I dwell.”

Heaths are a lovely tribe of plants, and during this month large tracts of waste land are enlivened by the pretty purple bells of the fine leaved species, (*Erica cinerea*), whose blossoms are now presenting a scene of wild delight, covering those large tracts which during the greater part of the year looked desolate and bare.

“Sweet flow’ret! from nature’s indulgence thou’rt
cast,
Thy home’s on the cold heath, thy nurse is the blast,

No shrub spreads its branches to shelter thy form,
Thou'rt shook by the winds, and thou'rt beat by the
 storm,
But the bird of the moor on thy substance is fed,
And thou giv'st to the hare of the mountain a bed."

To those pent up in cities for months what pleasure it must be to rove over the wild common, and mark the wild heath flowers that raise their purple bells at every step ; what joy to hear the wild bee humming about the blossoms in search of the nectar hidden within their cups, and to inhale the perfume of the " lang yellow broom," and golden furze, which are its usual companions.

"Flowers ! flowers ! who loveth them not ?
Who hath his childhood's sports forgot ?
 When daisies white,
 And kingcups bright,
And snowdrops, cowslips and daffodils,
Lured us to meadows, and woods, and rills,
 And we wandered on
 Till a wreath was won
Of the heath bells crowning the far off hills."

The stems of this little shrub are about a foot high, branched, with narrow leaves, three together ; the flowers are numerous, and form a terminal cluster of drooping purplish red blossoms. The branches make an excellent and durable thatch, and are used by the highlanders for that purpose as well as appropriating them for their beds, where the hardy mountaineer after his exertions, will rest as

calmly, and experience as sound and refreshing slumbers, as though his couch was of down. Scott, in the *Lady of the Lake*, notices it as follows :—

“The stranger’s bed
Was there of mountain heather made,
Where oft an hundred guests before had lain,
And dream’d their forest sports again.

The Cornish Heath (*Erica vagans*) is a very beautiful plant, and is found in Cornwall and Ireland. A plant very similar to the Heath is the Common Ling (*Calluna vulgaris*), a low shrub growing on commons and moors, and derives its name from *Calluno*, to cleanse or adorn. Sir E. Smith observes, that it is applicable to this shrub whether we consider the beauty of its flowers or the circumstance of brooms being made from its twigs. It is capable of being converted into ropes, and affords a yellow dye. It bears an extremely pretty rose-coloured blossom which extends up to the top of the stem. Grouse feed almost exclusively upon this plant, and the *Erica cinerea*.

“Flower of the waste, the heath fowl shuns
For thee, the brake and tangled wood ;
To thy protecting shade she runs,
The tender buds supply her food,
The young forsake her downy plumes,
To rest upon thy opening blooms.

“ Flower of the desert though thou art,
The deer that range the mountain free,
The graceful doe—the stately hart,
These food and shelter seek from thee,
The bee thy earliest blossom greets,
And draws from thee her choicest sweets.

“ Gem of the heath ! whose modest bloom
Sheds beauty o’er the lonely moor ;
Though thou dispense no rich perfume,
Nor yet with splendid tints allure ;
Both valour’s crest and beauty’s bower,
Oft has thou deck’d—a favorite flower.

“ Flower of the wild, whose purple glow
Adorns the dusky mountain’s side,
Not the gay hues of Iris’ bow,
Nor garden’s artful varied pride,
With all its wreath of sweets could cheer
Like thee the hardy mountaineer.”

GRANT.

Sir W. Jackson Hooker says, “ this plant makes an excellent edging to garden plots, and bears clipping as well as box ;” but the difficulty to get it to take root in some soils, prevents its being used for the purpose.

BINDWEED.

(Convolvulus.)

Class, Pentandria. Order, Monogynia. N. O., Convolvulaceæ.

We are often led to prize and also to admire rare flowers, and if nursed in a hot-house and attended with expense, they are often thought highly of, whilst, perhaps, they do not possess a tenth part of the beauty, richness, or delicacy of many of the flowers with which summer with a liberal hand graces our wild scenery; and amongst the number the large white cups of the Great Bindweed (*Convolvulus sepium*) are not to be excelled by any flower in pureness of tint, beauty of form and gracefulness of growth. The large heart-shaped leaves look exceedingly handsome trailing about our hedges, and occasionally throwing out its beautiful cup.

“The Bindweed pure and pale,
That sues to all for aid,
And when rude storms assail
Her snowy virgin veil,
Doth like some timid maid
In conscious weakness most secure,
Unscath'd its sternest shocks endure.”

The flower stalks are square, and it has heart-shaped bracteas close under the flower, which are sometimes tinged with rose colour.

“How fair her pendant wreath
O'er brush and brake is twining;
While meekly there beneath,
Midst fern and blossom'd heath,
Her lovely sister shining;
Tinged with such gentle hues as streak
A slumbering infant's glowing cheek.”

AGNES STRICKLAND.

The Small Bindweed (*C. arvensis*) is very common in corn fields, the root is creeping, and, like the former species, if it once gets into the arable land, or a garden hedge, it is impossible to eradicate it. In the corn field its slender stalks encircle the corn and injures the produce, and the farmer well knows the difficulty experienced to expel its tenacious roots from his cultivated ground.

“We merry flowers are running
The meadow mazes through,
And be farmers e'er so cunning,
We're as cunning too.

“Up an ear of barley
We nimbly twist and twirl,
To deck its brown stem early,
With a wreath of pink and pearl.

“We climb the poppy's hairy stalk,
And with wrath he grows more red

To see us, weeds of the meadow walk,
Peer up above his head.

“And many a time the farmer vows
He'll banish us his land,
But we still run up the hawthorn boughs,
A merry and myriad band.”

Like the Pimpernel and some other flowers, it closes its blossoms before approaching storms. It rejoices in sunshine like other plants of the same family, and does not display the beauty of the flower after the sun has attained his meridian; the flowers are pink, and throw out a perfume resembling almonds.

After the corn is cut and hauled from the field, we find this plant trailing along the ground, and if a few stray stalks of corn be left amongst the stubble, the convolvulus is sure to find it, and twine its wiry stem around it; on observing this the poet has written

“See here although the field is bare,
Fringing the path or scattered near,
A few neglected ears we find,
Round which the convolvulus hath twin'd.
Though scorn'd by all the world besides,
Still fond and true she with them bides.”

THE CLOVE PINK.

(Dianthus caryophyllus.)

Class, Decandria. Order, Digynia. N. O., Caryophylleæ.

Grows on old walls in some parts of England. As it is seen blossoming in that situation few persons would suppose it to be the origin of one of the fairest garden flowers of the season.

“The curious, choice Clove, July flower,”

or carnation of our gardens, with its variety of form and colour, but by cultivation the petals have been enlarged and multiplied, and its colour infinitely varied from the darkest purple to the purest white, with all the hues of red, from the rich crimson to the pale rose. In some of them we see a brilliant eye, whilst others are exquisitely marbled, striped, and figured. Under all its diversities, however, it retains its delicious spicy fragrance, and hence has been made the emblem of “Woman’s Love,” which no circumstances can change.

“It is a fearful thing

To love as I love thee ; to feel the world,
The bright—the beautiful, joy-giving world
A blank without thee. Never more to me

Can hope, joy, fear, wear different seeming. Now
I have no hope that does not dream of thee,
I have no joy that is not shared by thee,
I have no fear that does not dread of thee.

L. E. L.

Many stems shoot out from the same root, and all the leaves are narrow, grass-like, and very glaucous. When compared with the lovely carnations of the garden, we cannot say it bears a comparison, except in its delicious perfume. Many pages may be written, and abundance of poetry collected in praise of the cultivated flowers of this genus, but we confine ourselves to the wild ones, where

“Oft by some mouldering time-worn tower,
Or classic stream he loves to rove,
Where dancing nymphs and satyrs blithe,
Once listened to the voice of love.”

THE EYEBRIGHT,

(*Euphrasia officinalis*.)

Class, Didynamia. Order, Angiospermia. Nat. Ord.,
Scrophularinææ.

Varies from an inch to five or six inches in height. The flowers spring from the axil of the leaf, are white or reddish, streaked with purple, with a dark purple spot, which somewhat resem-

bles the pupil of the eye. The blossom is two-lipped, the lower one divided into three deep, unequal, notched segments. This plant takes its name from *Euphrosyne*, a term expressive of joy and pleasure. It is supposed to be of great efficacy in removing complaints of the eye, and clearing any obstruction in the vision. Milton alludes to this supposed virtue, where he represents the archangel Michael as cleansing Adam's sight by its application, when about to shew him the fate of his descendants, he

“Then purged with Euphrasy and rue
The visual organ, for he had much to see.”

THE WILD THYME.

(*Thymus serpyllum.*)

Class, Didynamia. Order, Gymnospermia. N. O.,
Labiatae.

Is known to every Rambler over heathy and mountainous districts, where it is abundantly found.

“I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows,
Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,
Quite over-canopied with lush woodbine,
With sweet musk roses and with eglantine.”

Shakspeare writes ; and how often have we found

such a bank, and how frequently have we enjoyed the delicious odour which has arisen from the thymy grass as we walked over it in our rambles. It possesses the same qualities, but is milder and more grateful than the garden Thyme ; and sheep that graze on the hills abounding with this and other aromatic plants, is considered superior in flavour to other mutton. Bees are also particularly partial to the flowers of the Wild Thyme, and the honey from the hives in the vicinity of beds of this plant is said to be of a remarkably delicious flavour. It derives its name from the Greek for *strength*, from its balsamic odour strengthening the animal spirits. The Wild Thyme has been noticed by many poets : Virgil writes,

“No more my goats shall I behold you climb
The steepy cliffs, or crop the flowery thyme.”

The roots are fibrous and creeping, the stems are hard and wiry, procumbent, and rooting, covered with down, and of a pink colour ; the flowers grow in a whorl generally at the extremity, with one or two distant whorls ; the leaves are somewhat egg-shaped, on short foot-stalks, the margins are ciliated, and the whole leaf is occasionally clad with down.

THE COMMON VIPER'S BUGLOSS,

(*Echium Vulgare.*)

Class, Pentandria. Order, Monogynia. Nat. Ord.,
Boragineæ.

Has an herbaceous stem which is hispid, and thickly dotted with tubercles, the leaves are narrow, lance-shaped, and covered with bristles ; the blossoms grow in lateral spikes, are very beautiful, at first reddish purple, and then brilliant blue, and sometimes white.

“The Bugloss buds of crimson hue,
To azure flowers expand,
Like changeful banner bright to view,
By the wild winds fanned.”

It grows in waste ground, in sandy and gravelly soil, and is abundant on the Surrey hills, with pale flowers. The plant grows two or three feet high : the blossom is of one petal, bell-shaped, with five divisions. Its name is taken from *echis*, a viper, because this or some plant of the family was supposed to be an effectual remedy against the bite of that reptile.

“With mingled hue
Of purple, blue, and brilliant red,
Though spurned beneath the passing tread,
Prickly and harsh, with tints that pass
The garden pride—the Viper Grass.”

The whole plant is exceedingly rough and bristly, and very unpleasant to handle, as indeed are all the natural family Boragineæ.

The Small Bugloss, (*Lycopsis arvensis*,) produces small bright blue flowers, and grows in corn fields in a sandy soil.

“Where thistles stretch their prickly arms afar,
And to the ragged infant threaten war,
The poppies nodding, mock the hope of toil,
And the blue Bugloss paints the sterile soil.”

The Common Alkanet, *Anchusa officinalis*,) and the evergreen species, (*A. sempevirens*) also belong to the same family, are very bristly, and bear exceedingly bright blue blossoms. The roots are used in making rouge for the face : but we are glad to find this barbarous custom of disfiguring the countenance is now thrown aside by our ladies, and left to the Arabs, Turks, Indians, and other uncivilized nations. The Alkanet root is also steeped in oil for the purpose of polishing beech and other wood, and giving them a darker hue. Galen in his time, noticed the root as a cosmetic, and the rouge made from it is said to be the most ancient, as well as the most innocent of all the

paints for the face. It was used by the ancients to give an agreeable colour to their ointments, and is now applied to colouring lip salves and plasters. Pliny states that where the alkanet was used, they added salt to prevent the oil in those compositions from becoming rancid. The root was in request by the Romans for colouring wood, wool, and wax. Our apothecaries are principally supplied with this root from Languedoc and Provence.

THRIFT.

(*Statice Armeria*).

Class, Pentandria. Order, Pentagynia. N. O., Plumbagineæ.

We have here a flower that is to be found in almost every cottage garden we pass, where it is used as an edging to the flower beds.

“’Tis this which rustic neatness leads
Round the trim garden’s walks and beds,
Whose globe-like tufts of blossom throw
O’er the green marsh a rosy glow,
Nor less where alpine regions lift
Their misty tops, the hardy Thrift.”

MANT.

The natural places of growth of the common Thrift, or sea Gil iflower, the species above spoken of, are muddy sea shores, among rocks on the sea

coast, and upon the tops of the highest mountains. It bears a number of rose-coloured blossoms at the head of the stalk. There are four other species of this plant, bearing colours varying from pink to blue, all of which grow on the sea shore. The Thrift improves in size and colour by cultivation. In the days of Queen Elizabeth, when the parterre was generally divided into circles, semicircles, octagons, hearts and diamonds, the Thrift for this geometrical style of gardening was considered a very necessary plant; and for which purpose Gerard says, "it serveth very fitly." The English name of Thrift was most likely given on account of the rapid manner in which it propagates itself by its roots in the garden. It seldom produces seed in such situations, although it does so in abundance in its natural situation, whether it be on the coast or on the highest mountain. If the garden soil be rich in which it is planted the roots should be divided annually or they will be liable to rot and decay.

THE WILD TEASEL.

(Dipsacus Sylvestris.)

Class, Tetrandria. Order, Monogynia. Nat. Ord.,
Dipsaceæ.

It is a tall growing plant, common by road sides in some parts of England. The stalk is thick, white, and very strong: the leaves grow in pairs encompassing the stem, and are prickly on the under side along the rib; the bur-like heads of blossoms are oblong, larger than an egg, and the little blossoms grow very close together. There is another species called Fuller's Teasel, (*D. Ful-lonum*), used in dressing cloth; this is cultivated, and rarely found wild.

“Arm’d with the bending awns that pull
Through the close web the knotted wool,
Raise the soft downy nap, and smooth
The texture with tenacious tooth,
No skillful art a tool has planned
To match the gift of nature’s hand.”

An infusion of the root of the Wild Teasel, if taken inwardly, is said to strengthen the stomach and create an appetite, and is also good in obstructions of the liver.

Among the rarer plants to be sought after this month are the following,

White Water Lily, (*Nymphaea alba*;) rare; Highland lakes; Common Yellow Water Lily, (*Nuphar lutea*;) lakes and ditches; Round rough-headed Poppy, (*Papaver hybridum*;) rare; sandy fields; Norfolk, Durham, Cornwall; Common Welsh Poppy, (*Meconopsis Cambrica*;) rare; Devon, Cheddar rocks, Somerset; Violet Horned Poppy, (*Glaucium violaceum*;) Cambridgeshire, Norfolk; Dyer's Woad, (*Isatis tinctoria*;) cultivated fields, Ely, Durham; Awl Wort, (*Subularia aquatica*;) alpine lakes; Alpine Rock Cress, (*Arabis petræa*;) alpine rocks, North Wales, Scotland; Wild Mignonette, (*Roseda lutea*;) waste places; Dyer's Rocket, (*Roseda luteola*;) waste places; Round Leaved Sundew, (*Drosera rotundifolia*;) bogs and moist heaths; Great Sundew, (*Drosera Anglica*;) bogs; Bedfordshire, Norfolk, Lancashire; Deptford Pink, (*Dianthus Armeria*;) pastures and hedges; England and Scotland; Proliferous Pink, (*Dianthus Prolifer*;) rare; gravelly pastures; Clove Pink, (*Dianthus Caryophyllus*;) old walls; Norwich, Monmouthshire; Maiden Pink, (*Dianthus deltoides*;) banks; sandy soil; Common Soapwort, (*Saponaria officinalis*;) hedge banks, and sandy meadows; Narrow Leaved Pale Flax, (*Linum angustifolium*;) sandy pastures near the sea; Bloody Cranesbill, (*Geranium San-*

guineum;) alpine and limestone pastures; Gloucestershire; Yellow Balsam, (*Impatiens Noli-metangere*;) shady woods, Yorkshire and Lancashire; White Melilot, (*Melilotus leucantha*;) Surrey, Yarmouth; Narrow Leaved Bird's Foot Trefoil, (*Lotus major*;) ditch sides; Sweet Milk Vetch, (*Astragalus glycyphyllus*;) thickets, in gravelly and calcareous soils; Purple Marsh Cinquefoil, (*Comarum palustre*;) peat bogs; Alpine Lady's mantle, (*Alchemilla alpina*;) mountains North of England; Rose bay Willow Herb, (*Epilobium angustifolium*;) moist banks; rare in England, Monmouthshire; Yellow Pennywort, (*Cotyledon lutea*;) Yorkshire and Somersetshire; White Stonecrop, (*Sedum album*;) rocks, Worcestershire, Suffolk, Middlesex; St. Vincent's Rock Stonecrop, (*Sedum rupestre*;) rocks, Somersetshire, Bristol; Yellow Mountain Saxifrage, (*Saxifraga aizoides*;) springy places, North of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland; Sea Holly (*Eryngium maritimum*;) sandy sea shores; Spotted Cat's-ear, (*Hypochaeris maculata*;) chalky and limestone pastures; Elecampane, (*Inula Helenium*;) rare; moist pastures; Monmouthshire; Rampion Bell Flower, (*Campanula Rapunculus*;) gravelly soil, Surrey, Kent; Serrated Winter Green, (*Pyrola secunda*;) rare in England, Yorkshire; Lesser Winter Green, (*Pyrola minor*;) woods, North of England; Least Gentianella, (*Cicendia filiformis*;) sandy turf bogs, South of

England ; Greater Snapdragon, (*Antirrhinum majus*;) old walls and chalk pits, Monmouthshire ; Lesser Snapdragon, (*Antirrhinum Oron-tium*;) corn fields, dry soil, near Abergavenny, Monmouthshire. White Mullein, (*Verbascum Lychnitis*;) road sides, chalky soil ; Lesser Skull Cap, (*Scutellaria minor*;) not common, wet heathy pastures ; Kidney shaped Mountain Sor-rel, (*Oxyria reniformis*;) Wales, and North of England ; Common Birthwort, (*Aristolochia Clematitis*;) copses : east and south east of Eng-land ; Common Frogbit, (*Hydrocharis Morsus Ranæ*;) ditches and pools.

AUGUST.

“ ’Tis a fair sight, that vest of gold,
Those wreaths that August’s brow enfold,
O ! ’tis a goodly sight and fair
To see the fields their produce bear,
Waved by the breezes lingering wing
So thick, they seem to laugh and sing,
And call the heart to fell delight ;
Rejoicing in that beauteous sight,
And call the reaper’s skilful hand
To cull the riches of the land.”

THE hot July has had its effect upon our flowers, their beauty is paled ; their essences exhausted, not indeed wasted ; for they have performed their part in perfuming the summer breezes and they must now fade.

Now all around is unbounded sunshine, embrowning the surface of vegetation, and curdling the ears of corn into fulness and ripeness :

“ Harvest’s lovely month is come !
Joy is in the harvest home
In a rustic triumph borne,
Homeward goes the yellow corn ;
Scythe and sickle in their hand,
Homewards o’er the sun-brown’d land,

With the laugh and jocund song
The light hearted reapers throng
While above the twilight lane
Like a pile of gold the wain,
Glowing in the western ray
Totters on its joyous way."

Month of the reapers, we hail thee in thy vest
of yellowish brown, already labour steps from his
native hills to meet thee, and shortly he will re-
turn from the vallies which now stand thick with
corn, laden with thy treasures, for he will bring
home his sheaves rejoicing.

" 'Tis harvest-time, and the abounding earth
Is full of solemn beauty, and the mirth
Of gleesome peasants seems to stay awhile
The fleeting grace of summer's radiant smile,
When Dryads from the silent woods look out
To see the joyous rout,
Hearing loud laughs and airy voices borne
From sunlit fields of thickly piled corn."

HOWITT.

The counties of Sussex, Kent, and Hereford,
in this month yield their valuable produce of hops,
when a busy scene presents itself ; the men draw-
the hop poles out of the earth, the women taking
their loaded stems, and the children picking the
clusters off the plants and throwing them into
baskets. Hop picking is perhaps the gayest of
all harvests, and a hop garden is comparatively as
beautiful as the rich vineyards of the Continent.

In the Alban Calender August stood as the sixth month, and thence named Sextilus. Numa gave it the place it now occupies, and it was denominated August by the Roman Senate in honour of Octavius Cæsar, better known as Augustus. The Saxons termed it *Barn-monat* and *Woed-monat*, to express the beauteous clothing of the ground in harvest.

It is at its commencement usually calm and hot, and the rich glow of summer is seldom in perfection until now. The full influence of the sun is poured forth on the productions of the earth, and they become matured beneath its rays. There is abundance of dew; the moon is particularly beautiful, and is called the "harvest-moon." How can we look on the scenery this month presents to us without feeling our minds elevated towards the giver of every blessing for his bountiful goodness.

The husbandman is now diligently employed, and on every fair day all hands are at work securing the precious grain before it gets over ripe, or ere the depredations of birds shall have diminished its quantity, or the fall of rain lessened its value. As soon as the sheaves are removed, the gleaners take possession of the fields, and with persevering industry collect the scattered ears, and as much as a sack of flour is thus sometimes gained by the labourer's wife and children. The practise of gleaning is recorded in the scriptures,

where we find provision made for the gleaners among the Jewish people, thus "When ye reap the harvest of your land thou shalt not make clear riddance of the corners of thy field, when thou reapest, neither shalt thou gather any gleanings of thy harvest; thou shalt leave them to the poor and to the stranger," and in the book of Ruth an interesting picture of an harvest-field is presented.

This month is situated on the confines of summer and autumn, and it is difficult to say which has the better claim to it. It is dressed in half the flowers of the one, and in half the fruits of the other, and it has a sky and temperature of its own, and which vies in beauty with those of spring. There is often a delicious coolness in the evening air, conveying to the sense the fragrance of the remaining sweet scented flowers and of the ripe fruits, and affording a welcome refreshment after the heat of the day.

Heaths and commons are now in their highest beauty, the flowers of the heath covering them with a fine purple hue, and ferns are now in their greatest perfection. The fields are partly deprived of their rich produce, by the number of flowers being greatly diminished, those that bloomed in June and July are running to seed, and have but few successors, but still many flowers are yet to be discovered, so

“ Come over the meadow and scent the fresh air,
For the pure mountain breezes are everywhere,
We'll follow this winding path up to the hills,
And spring with a lightsome foot over the rills,
Up, up,—it grows sweeter the higher we get,
With the flowers of the season that linger here yet,
Nay, pause not to gaze at the landscape now ;
It is finer when seen from the high hill's brow,
We will gather all curious flowers as we go ;
The sweet and the scentless, and those that bend low;
The pale and the gaudy, the tiny, the tall,
From the vine, from the shrub, we will gather them
all.

“ Now here's the Clematis, all graceful and fair,
You may set it like pearls in the folds of your hair,
And if for your bosom you'd have a bouquet,
Here's the Meadow-pink sweet, and the Touch-me-
not gay,
Here's the full blown Azalea, perfuming the air,
Here's the Cardinal flower that a princess might wear,
And the wild mountain Phlox, pink and purple and
blue,
And star-flowers both of white and of golden hue,
And here's a bright blossom, a gay one indeed,
Our mountain maids name it the Butterfly weed ;
So gorgeous its colours, one scarcely can tell
If the flower or the insect in beauty excel.
And near us I know by her breath on the gale
Is the tall yellow Primrose so pretty and pale.

“ Here's the Pigeon-pea fit for the fairy's bowers,
And the purple Thrift, straightest and primest of
flowers,
Here is Privet, no prettier shrub have we met,
And the Midsummer-daisy is hiding here yet.

THE GUELDER ROSE.

(Viburnum Opulus.)

Class, Pentandria. Order, Trigynia. N. O., Caprifoliaceæ.

Is a large growing shrub, often found on the banks of streams, and in moist woods. It bears a dense kind of umbel of white blossoms, which are succeeded by berries of a reddish purple colour, the leaves are large, three lobed, with serrated edges; all the marginal flows of the umbel are abortive, having neither stamens or pistils, and consist of a large plain five-lobed petal. This plant is also known by the name of the Water Elder. There is a foreign species often cultivated in shrubberies, the flowers of which, instead of forming a flat circle, form a globular head, and is called the snow-ball tree. At first sight it appears like a maple tree pelted with snow-balls, and Cowper with great beauty describes it as

“Throwing into the darkest gloom
Of neighbouring cypress, or more sable hue,
Her silvery globes, light as the foaming surf
That the wind severs from the broken wave.”

THE TASK.

Another wild species found in rocky limestone

woods, is called the Wayfaring Tree, or Mealy Guelder Rose (*V. Lantana*.)

“ Wayfaring tree ! what ancient claim
Hast thou to that right pleasant name,
Was it that some faint pilgrim came
Unhopedly to thee,
In the brown desert’s weary way,
’Mid toil and thirst’s consuming sway,
And there, as ’neath thy shade he lay
Bless’d the wayfaring tree.

“ Or is it that thou lov’st to show,
Thy coronals of fragrant snow,
Like life’s spontaneous joys that flow
In paths by thousands beat ;
Whate’er it be, I love it well,
O name, methinks, that surely fell
From poet in some evening dell
Wandering with fancies sweet.

“ A name given in those olden days,
When ’mid the wild woods vernal sprays,
The merle* and mavis† poured their lays
In the love listening ear,
Like songs of an enchanted land
Sung sweetly to some fairy band,
Listening, with doff’d helms in either hand,
In some green hollow near.”

This shrub has heart-shaped, thick and veined leaves, serrated at the edges, and downy beneath, the bark is used to make birdlime, and the young shoots are much used in the Crimea for the tubes of tobacco pipes.

* Blackbird.

† Thrush.

THE HAREBELL.

(*Campanula rotundifolia.*)

Class, Pentandria. Order, Monogynia. N. O., Campanulaceæ.

“ With drooping bells of clearest blue,
Thou didst attract my childish view,
Almost resembling
The azure butterflies that flew
Where on the heath thy blossoms grew,
So lightly trembling.”

The round leaved Bell flower, or Harebell, is a slender and graceful plant, and is usually found with its drooping blue blossoms on dry hilly pastures.

“ On the hill
Let the wild heath bell flourish still.”

The root leaves are round, heart-shaped, and wither very soon ; the stem is about a foot high ; the leaves near the bottom are lance-shaped, gradually getting narrower towards the top of the stem.

“ The Harebell, for her stainless azured hue,
Claims to be worn of none but those are true.”



HARE BELL AND FORGET ME NOT



Sir Walter Scott speaks of the slender and fragile nature of the plant in his description of Ellen Douglas, thus,

“A foot more light, a step more true
Ne’er from the heath flower dashed the dew,
E’en the slight Harebell raised its head
Elastic from her airy tread.”

And again Ellen exclaims, on stooping and plucking a Harebell from the ground,

“For me, whose memory scarce conveys
An image of more splendid days,
This little flower that loves the lea,
May well my simple emblem be;
It drinks heaven’s dew, blithe as the rose
That in the king’s own garden grows;
And when I place it in my hair,
Allen, a bard, is bound to swear,
He ne’er saw coronet so fair.”

This elegant little flower, familiar to us all as the “Blue bell of Scotland,” has been likened by the poet to the small azure butterflies that flutter on the heath, and in hue and delicacy of form, there is certainly some resemblance.

“The azure Harebell, that doth ceaseless ring
Her wildering chimes to vagrant butterflies,
As they in dalliance fan her with their wing,
Hath charms for me;
Those flower-like creatures know no fairer prize
To woo than she.”

There is an elasticity in its airy stalk which sets its drooping bells almost perpetually in motion, so that it has been happily imagined that the fairy queen is soothed on night serene with "faint sweet tones" of its "soft bells pealing." One can scarcely view this pretty blossom without our thoughts recurring to the days of childhood, and to the early rambles over barren downs, which by occasional patches of gorse, and heath, and wild thyme, and knots of Harebells, were rendered interesting and delightful.

"Where feathery fern and golden broom
Increase the sand-rock cavern's gloom,
I've seen thee tangled,
Mid tufts of purple heather bloom,
By vain Arachne's treacherous loom,
With dew-drops spangled.

"Midst ruins trembling to decay,
Thy flowers their heavenly hues display,
Still freshly springing
Where pride and pomp have pass'd away,
On mossy tomb and turret grey,
Like friendship clinging.

"When glow-worm lights illumine the scene,
And silvery daisies dot the green,
Thy flowers revealing ;
Perchance to soothe the fairy queen
With faint, sweet tones, on night serene,
Thy soft bells pealing.

"But most I love thine azure braid,
When softer flowers are all decay'd,
And thou appearest

Stealing along the hedge-row shade,
Like joys that linger as they fade,
Whose last are dearest.

“Thou art the flower of memory ;
The pensive soul recalls in thee
The year’s past pleasures ;
And led by kindred thoughts will flee
Till back to careless infancy
The path she measures.

“Beneath autumnal breezes bleak
So faintly fair, so sadly meek,
I’ve seen thee bending ;
Pale as the pale blue veins that streak
Consumption’s thin transparent cheek
With death hues blending.

“Thou shalt be sorrow’s love and mine,
The violet and the eglantine
With spring are banished ;
In summer’s beam the roses shine,
But I of thee my wreath will twine,
When these are vanished.”

H. HEBER.

On passing over a dreary heath, we are often struck with delight on beholding springing up among the heather, and the golden furze these graceful bells of delicate blue, which seem to say,—

“Are we not beautiful? are not we
The darlings of mountain, and woodland and lea?
Plunge into the forest—are we not fair?
Go to the high-road—we’ll meet you there!

Oh! where is the flower that content may tell,
Like the laughing, the nodding, and dancing Hare-
bell?"

It is the most graceful and slender of all our erect wild flowers. Its sweet blue blossoms hang so lightly on the stem that one would imagine the first blast would break it to pieces, yet it is strong in its fragile form; it trembles and bends its gentle head before the tempest, but quickly rises as fresh as before the rude blast had bent its frail form to the earth, and seems as if nought but the beaming sun had ever smiled upon it.

"The Harebell bright and blue,
That decks the dingle wild,
In whose cerulean hue
Heaven's own blest tint we view,
On day serene and mild,
How beauteous like an azure gem,
She droopeth from her graceful stem."

Many other species of the Bell flower are found wild, the most showy of which is the Giant Bell Flower, (*Campanula latifolia*), growing in moist woods: it is three or four feet in height, bearing large blue blossoms; the leaves are between lance-shaped and egg-shaped, rough, with saw-like edges. It is found in Norfolk, Suffolk, Monmouthshire, and Bedfordshire, and is very common in the woody glens of Scotland. Another species, the Nettle-leaved Bell Flower, (*C. Trachelium*), has an angular stem and heart-shaped leaves,

which are rough and bristly ; it bears a blue blossom, and the plant grows from two to three feet in height. The Spreading Bell flower, (*C. patula*,) somewhat resembles the Harebell, but the flowers are of a light purple colour, larger and more spreading.

THE SNAPDRAGON.

(*Antirrhinum majus*.)

Class, Didynamia. Order, Angiospermia. N. O., Scrophularineæ.

This flower is associated with our old castles and monastic edifices.

“Mid ruins tumbling to decay,
Thy flowers their brilliant hues display,
Still freshly springing
Where pride and pomp have pass'd away,
On mossy tomb and turret grey,
Like friendship clinging.”

Into the crevices of the stones of these honoured ruins, and “lone monument of ages” the Snapdragon forces his hard fibrous root, and on such places alone it is to be found.

“Flowers of the solitary place!
Grey ruin’s golden crown
That lendest melancholy grace
To haunts of old renown;

Thou mantlest o'er the battlement,
By strife or storm decay'd,
And fillest up each envious rent
Time's canker tooth hath made."

It abounds on the walls of the castles in Monmouthshire, as well as on that most beautiful and picturesque of all Gothic monuments, Tintern Abbey, seated as it is in a most sequestered and delightful spot.

"Thy solitude looks lovely in the vale,
The mountain forest flutters o'er thy wall,
The Wye winds round thee, and the snow white sail
Comes glittering downward on the river's fall."

Those who have paid a visit to these monastic ruins, will scarcely ever forget the impression made on the mind as they viewed the venerable pile.

"For here no more soft music floats,
No holy anthem's chanted now,
All hushed, except the ring-doves notes
Low murmuring from the beechen bough."

The blossoms of the Snapdragon are of various colours, some are pure white, others red, and some are variegated. It is a curiously formed flower, the mouth of the corolla is closed by a projecting palate, which opens on being pressed by the thumb and finger at the base, and then it has the appearance of the gaping mouth of an animal, and the stamen which are now displayed somewhat resemble teeth; and it has from hence

received the name of dog's-mouth, lion's-snap, toad's-mouth, and snap-dragon from its curious formed blossom ; and calf's-snout from the form of its seed vessel.

We cannot examine this flower without admiration, for we then find how wonderfully it is adapted for the situations in which it grows naturally, by having its parts of fructification so guarded against the bleak winds, that it defies the rain or tempest to enter the blossom until the seed is formed, when the mask falls off to allow free access of air to the vessels.—Bees often enter the blossom between its closely pressed lips, as if conscious of such an opening, although undiscernible to the nicest eye. The plant produces its flowers in an unilateral spike, leaning towards the sun.

There is another indigenous species the lesser Snap-dragon (*A. Oroutium*): the blossoms are small in comparison to the one already spoken of. It is found in some parts of the south-east and south of England, and in some of the corn fields at the foot of Blorenge mountain, near Abergavenny, Monmouthshire : the flowers are pale purple, and the plant is remarkable for the length of the calyx segments.

Plants to be sought after during the month.

Seaside Koniga, (*Koniga maritima*,) sea rocks, Devon, Cornwall ; Common Marsh Mallow, (*Althæa officinalis*,) marshes near the sea, on the banks of the Severn ; Common grass of Parnassus,

(*Parnassia palustris*,) bogs, frequent in the north; Hyssop leaved Purple Loosestrife, (*Lythrum hyssopifolium*,) moist places, east of England; Clustered Alpine Saxifrage (*Saxifraga nivalis*,) Welsh and Highland mountains; Yellow Marsh Saxifrage, (*S. Hirculus*,) very rare, wet moors, Cheshire, Yorkshire; Wild Celery, (*Apium graveolens*,) marshy places near the sea, banks of the Wye; Slender Hare's ear, (*Bupleurum tenuissimum*,) salt marshes, Cheshire, south and east of England; Falcate leaved Hare's ear, (*B. falcatum*,) plentiful about Essex; Sea Samphire, (*Crithmum maritimum*,) rocks by the sea side; Prickly Lettuce, (*Lactuca Scariola*,) waste ground, Cambridge-shire and Essex; Alpine Saussurea, (*Saussurea alpina*,) moist alpine rocks, Snowdon; Brown Radiant Knapweed, (*Centaurea jacea*,) hedges and waste places, Sussex; Flaxleaved Goldilocks, (*Linosyris vulgaris*,) rocky places, Devon; Sea side cotton weed, (*Diotis maritima*,) sandy sea shores east and south of England; Field Southernwood, (*Artemesia campestris*,) rare, dry sandy heaths, Norfolk; American Cudweed, (*Gnaphalium margaritacum*,) moist meadows, Essex, south Wales, &c.; Canada Fleabane, (*Erigeron Canadensis*,) waste and cultivated ground; Corn bell Flower, (*Campanula hybrida*,) corn fields, south of England; Round headed Rampion, (*Phyteuma orbiculare*,) chalky soils south of London; Water Lobelia, (*Lobelia dortmanna*,) Lakes, north of England.

AUTUMN.

“Fair Autumn spreads her fields of gold,
And waves her amber wand ;
See earth its yellow charms unfold
Beneath her magic hand.”



AUTUMN.



“ O with what glory comes and goes the year !
The buds of Spring—those beautiful harbingers
Of sunny skies and cloudless times—enjoy
Life’s newness, and earth’s garniture spread out ;
And when the silver habit of the clouds
Comes down upon the Autumn sun, and, with
A sober gladness, the old year takes up
His bright inheritance of golden fruits,
A pomp and pageant fill the splendid scene.

“ There is a beautiful spirit breathing now,
Its mellow richness on the clustered trees,
And from a beaker full of richest dyes
Pouring new glory on the Autumn woods,
And dripping in warm light the pillar’d clouds.
Morn, on the mountain, like a summer bird
Lifts up her purple wing ; and in the vales
The gentle wind—a sweet and passionate wooer,
Kisses the blushing leaf, and stirs up life
Within the solemn woods of ash deep crimson’d,
And silver birch, and maple yellow leav’d,
Where Autumn like a faint old man sits down
By the way-side a-weary. Through the trees
The golden robin moves ; the purple finch
That on wild cherry and red cedar feeds :
A winter bird, comes with his plaintive whistle,
And pecks at the wych-hazel ; whilst aloud
From village roofs the warbling blue-bird sings,

And merrily with oft repeated stroke
Sounds from the thrashing-floor the busy flail.

“Oh ! what a glory doth this world put on
For him, that with a fervent heart goes forth,
Under the bright and glorious sky, and looks
On duties well performed, and days well spent ;
For him the wind, ay, the yellow leaves
Shall have a voice, and give him eloquent teaching,
He shall so hear the solemn hymn that death
Has lifted up for all, that he shall go
To his long resting place without a tear.”

If the earlier seasons delighted us with their freshness and beauty, and gave to our ears and eyes a beautiful profusion of songs and flowers, the present induces a sense of peaceful and quiet enjoyment, and of grateful feeling almost sufficient to compensate for the loss of the sweet spring and brilliant summer by its more subdued tones and sober colouring.

“No more the glowing flowers of spring,
Enrich the sweet romantic dell ;
Yet ah ! the tints of Autumn bring
A fading charm, a soft farewell.

“Dear Autumn ! as thy sober hues
Adorn the scene with shadowy grace :
A mellow beauty they diffuse
Which pensive pleasure loves to trace.

“And dearer is thy transient calm,
That wakes the mild and soothing tear
Than summer air of fragrant balm,

Than all the treasures of the year :
And sweeter is thy partial ray,
For, ah ! too soon it melts away."

HEMANS.

At this season our thoughts naturally recur with pleasure, to the many expeditions of our early youth, when with our friends that time may have now removed from us, we sallied forth to the woods for the purpose of nutting, regularly equipped for a scramble through briars and bushes, with commodious bags hung round our necks, and a long stick with a crook at the end, in our hands. The excitement attending these excursions—the threading of the intricate paths of the wood—the difficulties surmounted in the thorny brakes—the separation from our companions, in our eagerness in exploring the wood in search of the fruitful trees—the cool shades we gained to partake of our rural meal, with the roots of an aged oak for our seats, the moss for our carpet, and the crystal stream that glided at our feet for our drink. All these things we look back upon with pleasure ; and many of our young friends at this season will, doubtless, be enjoying themselves in the same manner.

The orchards now bend under the weight of their luscious fruit, and every thing proclaims that the fullness of the year is come. It was for this the frosts of winter, the rains of spring, and the sunshine of summer were called into activity ; the rich produce is now offered to our gathering.

“Now Autumn strews on every plain
His mellow fruits and fertile grain ;
And laughing plenty, crown'd with sheaves,
With purple grapes and spreading leaves,
In rich profusion pours around,
Her flowing treasures on the ground.
Oh ! mark the great, the liberal hand
That scatters blessings o'er the land ,
And to the God of Nature raise
The grateful song, the hymn of praise.”

One long harvest day is the life of Autumn ; it is for her to gather in the bounteous store, which sown in Spring, and nourished in Summer, is to be matured and garnered now, and left for subsistence and comfort in Winter,—the year's decline.

“Sweet Sabbath of the year,
While evening lights decay,
Thy parting steps methinks I hear,
Steal from the world away.

“Amid thy silent flowers
'Tis sad, but sweet to dwell,
Where falling leaves and drooping flowers
Around me breathe farewell.

“A deep and crimson streak
Thy dying leaves disclose ;
As on consumption's cheek
'Mid ruin blooms the rose.

“Thy scene each vision brings
Of beauty in decay ;
Of fair and early fading things,
Too exquisite to say.

“ Of joys that come no more,
Of flowers whose bloom is fled,
Of farewell wept upon the shore,
Of friends estranged and dead.

“ Of all that now may seem
To memory's tearful eye
The vanished beauty of a dream,
O'er which we gaze and sigh.”

The broad ferns with their finely divided and russet coloured fronds now arrest the eye, and the rich groups of fungi and lichens with their varied tints we find in shady spots.

Nothing can exceed the beauty of an autumnal sky, as the sun sinks to rest : so sweetly and serenely smiling a farewell, and giving place to the pale moon which has a peculiar charm at this season, although no longer cheered by the dulcet notes of the nightingale.

SEPTEMBER.

“ With a sweet unfaded dye,
Summer lingers in the sky,
Yet upon her glowing cheek,
Wanders now and then a streak
Of the lily’s paler hue ;
And her eyes delicious blue
Shines as though in tears it swam,
And her evening’s breath of balm,
Wafts no more the silver song
The enchanted woods among,
Is not this soft summer death,
(Still encircled with a wreath,
In whose living crownlet glows
Nature’s gem of gems—the rose,)
For our holy lesson given,
How to fit our age for heaven !
With what front of hope serene,
We shall quit the earthly scene,
Grateful glance upon the past,
Then lie flower-like down at last,
Leaving man the rich perfume
Of our virtues in the tomb.”

As yet the bounties of nature are in part un-
gathered, and the changing tints of the leaves just
warn us of the year’s decline, a few only are seared,
but how different in their appearance to what

they were a short time ago ; they have neither the brightness of early spring, nor the uniform richness of Autumn : but are imbued with a deep, dark hue ; a few on the beech and on the topmost branches of the elm may have become yellow, and here and there a brown hue edges the boughs of the chestnut ; but as yet full foliage clothes the forest trees, which bend slightly to the increasing breezes with an awful majesty. The change that has taken place in the aspect of the country tells us plainly that the youth of the year is gone, and that even its full maturity and strength are passing away. The fields so recently covered with waving corn, or enlivened by the busy labourers, are now bare and deserted, but the meadows are still looking fresh and beautiful, although the mornings and evenings are sometimes chilly and foggy, it is generally serene and pleasant, partaking of the warmth of summer and vigour of autumn, and the sun shines with mellow lustre, still imparting summer heat during the middle of the day. If September be not so bright with promise, and so buoyant with hope as May, it is even more imbued with the spirit of serene repose, in which the only true, because the only continuous enjoyment consists.

“ Season of mist and yellow fruitfulness ;
Close bosom friend of the maturing sun ;
Conspiring with him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch eves run.”

KEATS.

Notwithstanding that the year is fading, and winter stealing upon us, still we have a rich array of flowers that opened to our view during the preceding month, the splendid palace of nature is still sweetly adorned.

“ I would sing of you sweet wild flowers, of your lovely
beauty dream,
When wandering through the forest by the mountain’s
gurgling stream ;
When the joyous spring wakes gladness in all created
things,
And with light elastic tread her emerald mantle
brings :—
When the scented gales of summer, breathe glowing
life around,
And the air is filled with music, and many a woodland
sound ;
When the bright Autumnal tints give tokens of decay,
Like the parting gleams of sunshine, as the spirit
fades away.

“ I would sing of you sweet wild flowers, in the far-
sequestered glade,
Where noble pines and ancient oaks, cause deep and
solemn shade,
Where tufts of early primroses, and hidden violets
grow,
While listening to the wooing of the murmuring brook
below ;
Where the heather and the harebell grace the red deer’s
fairy home,
And the feathery ferns in beauty wave beneath the
azure dome ;

And where roaming o'er the purple hills I tread the
dewy sod,
And muse on nature's splendour, in communion with
her God.

"I would sing of you sweet wild flowers, in your free
untutor'd grace,
Where, lovely in your freshness, your lonely haunts
I trace ;
And when gazing on your beauty, I converse seem to
hold
With happy days gone by, with familiar friends of old ;
Oh ! can it be, they speak to us in the whispering
breeze's sigh ?
Do they smile on you sweet flowers, from their man-
sions in the sky ?
Then tell them how we cherish each word, and look,
and tone,
And bless the hopes of meeting where partings are
unknown."

RATHBONE.

Ripe blackberries now hang in thick clusters upon the hedges, and the *Convolvulus*, whose pure white blossom contrasts beautifully with the shining scarlet berries of the *Solanum Dulcamara*, droop from the branches ; the yellow flowers of the Toad-flax (*Linaria Vulgaris*,) are still seen on the banks, and the Mallow has not yet thrown off its blossoms ; let those who have a taste for flowers, amuse the spare moments with examining the remaining beauties before the winter sets in.

THE PHEASANT'S EYE.

(*Adonis autumnalis.*)

Class, Polyandria. Order, Polygynia. N. O., Ranunculaceæ.

But few new blossoms can be found in this month, and the one most deserving of notice is the Corn Adonis, or Pheasant's eye, a very pretty little plant, growing among the corn stubble about London, Norfolk, and in Gloucestershire; it bears a beautiful brilliant scarlet blossom, almost hid in its bright green feathery foliage, and is therefore often passed in our walks unobserved. It is not often found in the fields whilst the corn is on the ground, but if the field remain undisturbed the plants appear in abundance. There is a mythological story connected with this flower, which is told by authors in different ways.

It is said that Adonis, son of Cinyras, grew up a most beautiful youth, that he was a favourite of Proserpine, and was ardently loved by Venus, who joined with him in the pleasures of the chase. One day having wounded a boar, the animal turned upon him in his fury and killed him; (some say that Apollo assumed the form of the boar,) and on Venus finding him lying dead

“Over one shoulder doth she hang her head,
Dumbly she passions, frantically she doteth ;
She thinks he could not die, he is not dead ;
Her voice is stopped, her joints forget to bow ;
Her eyes are mad that they have wept till now.
Upon his hurt she looks so steadfastly,
That her sight dazzling makes the wound seem three;
And then she reprehends her mangling eyes,
That makes more gashes, where no wound should be,
His face seems twain, each several limb is doubled,
For oft the eye mistakes, the brain being troubled.”

She afterwards sprinkled nectar into his blood,
from which flowers immediately sprung ;

“By this the boy that by her side lay killed
Was melted like a vapour from her sight ;
And in his blood, that on the ground lay spilled,
A purple flower sprung up chequered with white,
Resembling well his pale cheeks, and the blood
Which in round drops upon their whiteness stood.

“She bows her head the new sprung flower to smell,
Comparing it to her Adonis' breath ;
And says within her bosom it shall dwell,
Since he himself is reft from her by death,
She crops the stalk, and in the breach appears
Green dropping sap, which she compares to tears.”

THE HAZEL-NUT.

(*Corylus Avellana*.)

Class, Monœcia, Order, Polyandria. N. O., Amnataceæ.

The nut-tree blossoms in February, but during this month it is most sought after for its fruit. The barren blossoms are collected into a long cylindrical catkin, which we see in abundance on the bushes before the leaves appear. The flowers contain about eight stamens. The fertile blossoms from which the fruit is produced are very small, each containing two pistils of a bright scarlet colour, the branches must be minutely examined to discover them : but on taking a branch in the hand in February, from some of the little buds just bursting a number of brilliant scarlet threads may be observed protruding themselves. The pollen or dust from the long catkins, falls on these little stigmas, and produces fruit. The botanical name *corylus*, is from the Greek, and signifies a bonnet or helmet, and the Roman name *Avellana*, was added on account of the abundant growth of the hazel in the neighbourhood of Avellino, a city of southern Italy, where the profits arising to the inhabitants from these trees in plentiful years amounted to sixty thousand ducats. The common name, hazel-nut appears to have been derived

from the Anglo-Saxons, which they called Hazel-nutu, for *Hazel* a *cap*, and *Knutu* a *nut*, so that the English as well as the Greek term originates from the peculiar growth of the calyx, which envelops the fruit in the same manner that a helmet or bonnet protects the head.

In almost every part of England we meet with hedges or coppices of hazel, and it seems to have been especially prevalent in the northern parts of Great Britain, for Sir William Temple says, in speaking of our island, "The north west part was called *Cal-dun*, signifying hills of hazel, with which it was covered : from which, the Romans, forming an easy and pleasant sound from what was harsh to their classical ear, gave it the name of Caledonia."

Many are the uses to which the hazel is applied ; the roots afford beautiful wood for inlaying ; the suckers form stakes, fishing rods, and walking sticks ; and hurdles, hoops, panniers, and baskets are manufactured from them ; excellent charcoal is obtained from the wood, and artist's crayons are made from it, which are preferred to all others, for the freedom with which the strokes are produced, and the ease with which they may be erased. The nuts abound with a mild oil, and are so agreeable to most palates that immense quantities are consumed every year, and the produce of our own woods being insufficient, thousands of bushels of foreign ones are annually imported.

The vain wish to penetrate into the secrets of futurity, and to discover the good and ill that is likely to be blended with their lot, in every uninstructed mind, is a natural and predominant feeling : and according to the ignorance that prevails in any particular localities, so is the importance attached to charms and superstitions. In some of the remote parts of England and in Scotland, the burning of nuts on All Hallow's Eve is a very favorite charm, and according to the manner in which they burn, the happiness or misery of an affianced pair is foretold. When the nuts burn quietly side by side with a steady flame the persons whom they represent are to be faithful to each other, and lead a happy life, but if the nut cracks or starts from the fire, the youth or damsel whose mark it bears is to prove untrue, or the marriage to be unfortunate. Graydon has illustrated this old custom thus :

“These glowing nuts are emblems true
Of what in human life we view ;
The ill-match'd couple fret and fume,
And thus in strife themselves consume ;
Or, from each other wildly start
And with a noise for ever part.
But see the happy, happy pair,
Of genuine love and truth sincere ;
With mutual fondness while they burn,
Still to each other kindly turn ;
And as the vital sparks decay,
Together gently sink away,
Till life's fierce ordeal being past,
Their mingled ashes rest at last.”

Flowers blooming this month :

Dwarf branching Centaury, (*Erythræa pulchella*;) sandy sea shores ; Marsh Gentian, (*Gentiana Pneumonanthe*;) moist heathy places, parts of England ; Small Alpine Gentian, (*Gentiana nivalis*;) very rare, mountains of Scotland ; Greater Dodder, (*Cuscuta Europæa*;) parasitical on thistles and nettles ; Lesser Dodder, (*Cuscuta Epithimum*;) parasitical on Thyme and Furze, frequent ; Mint, (*Mentha*;) thirteen different species ; Lesser Water Plantain, (*Alisma ranunculoides*;) ditches and turfy bogs ; Common Arrowhead, (*Sagittaria sagittifolia*;) ditches, and margins of rivers ; Common horned Pondweed, (*Zannichellia palustris*;) ditches and stagnant water.

OCTOBER.



“There are vapours in the sky,
When the day break opes its eye,
There are vapours round the sun
Ere the hastening day is done ;
Yet October pale and sere,
Thou to me of all the year,
Now declining to its rest,
Art the loveliest, sweetest, best ;
To the spirit’s musing holy,
Gentle month of melancholy,
By the noontide let me rove
Deep within some ancient grove ;
Where the forky branches spread
Like a cloister over head,
Then with often pausing feet
Let me find some mossy seat,
Where upon the emerging eye
Bursts the pomp of earth and sky,
Heaven in sunset splendour dyed,
Valley distant, dim and wide,
Streams that through their verdure break
Like a winding silver snake ;
Bays, upon whose azure breast
Seems the ships in light to rest,
While some central mountain’s brow,
Flaming in the western glow,
Down whose side the autumnal wood
Sweeps a gold and crimson flood,

In its ancient majesty,
Soars a pillar of the sky."

The infinitely varied and ever changing hues of the leaves of the trees, melting into every soft gradation of tint and shade, offer a pleasing spectacle to the eye of the admiring observer of nature, and give to the philosopher and moraliser a subject for the deepest reflection.

"The verdure fades, and the sun is faint,
And the woodland pride is brown and sere,
And the chilling winds, with mournful plaint
Like strains that soothe some dying saint,
Chaunt the dirge of the closing year,
To warn us that our end is near:
We pass like shades,—for our term is brief,
And we fall to the earth like the falling leaf."

The weather about this month is sometimes extremely misty, with a perfect calm. Hoar frosts are common, and the mornings and evenings chilly. Now the year has reached its grand climacteric, and is fast falling into the "sere and yellow-leaf." Every day a flower drops out of the wreath that binds its brow, not to be renewed. Every hour the sun looks more and more askance upon it, and the winds, those summer flatterers come to us less fawningly. Every breath shakes down showers of its leafy attire, leaving it gradually barer and barer for the blasts of winter to blow through it.

“Strewing with fruits and foliage the ground,
Welcoming desolation and decay.”

And yet October is lovely, still no less “for what it gives, than what it takes away,” and even for what it gives during the very act of robbing us of all the bright flowers, for the whole year cannot produce a sight fraught with more rich and harmonious beauty, than that which the woods and groves present during this month, notwithstanding, or rather in consequence of the daily decay of their summer attire. The gradual decay which loosens the withering leaves, gilds the autumnal landscape with a temporary splendour, superior to the verdure of spring or the luxuriance of summer. We need not say we allude to the changing leaves with all their lights and shades of green, amber, red, light red, light and dark green, white and russet.

“Those virgin leaves, of purest vivid green,
Which charm’d ere yet they trembled on the trees,
Now cheer the sober landscape in decay;
The lime fast fading, and the golden birch
With bark of silver hue; the moss-grown oak
Tenacious of its leaves of russet brown,
The ensanguined Dogwood, and a thousand tints
Which Flora dress’d in all her pride of bloom,
Could scarcely equal; decorate the groves.”

To these temporary colours are added the more lasting ones of ripened berries, a variety of which

now enrich the hedges ; the most conspicuous are the red hips of the rose ; the dark purple branches of the luxuriant blackberry ; the scarlet and green berries of the nightshade ; the fruit of the hawthorn ; the blue black sloes covered with their soft tempting looking bloom ; the dull coloured berries of the woodbine ; and the sparkling ones of the holly. Every breeze brings to the earth thousands of rich brown acorns among the falling leaves, leaving empty their hollow cups.—Now the rustics are busy in stripping the trees of the ripe elderberries to carry to the neighbouring market for sale, and digging their potatoes to store up for their winter use.

October was the eighth month of the Alban year, and in that of Romulus, whence originates the name it now bears, which is derived from *Octo*, eight, and *imber*, a shower of rain. It was the tenth as at present in the calender of Numa Pompilius, Julius and Augustus Cæsar. It was called by the Saxons *Wyn monat*, (wyn signifying wine) because it was the month in which they pressed grapes.

As the flowers die away, the holly and ivy have a brighter and fresher look, and seem to burst out with a summer like attire.

THE FURZE.

(Ulex Europæus.)

Class, Diadelphia. Order, Decandria. N. O., Leguminosæ.

Flings out its bright golden flowers upon the otherwise bare common at an early period of the year, often in the month of February, it blooms throughout the summer months, and

“The dauntless Furze with form so bold,
And prickles set to guard its flowers of gold,
On barren heaths in gay embroidery drest,
Is now unfolding its yellow vest.”

This plant is very rigid, and thickly set with long spines, and affords shelter for hares and rabbits. It is used in some parts for fences, and sometimes for heating ovens, from its emitting a great degree of heat, and the ashes are used for a lye in washing. A great part of our wastes having of late years come into cultivation, immense quantities have been exterminated.

“The toiling swain
With many a sturdy stroke cuts up at last
The tough and sinewy furze. How hard he fought

To win the glory of the barren waste!
For what more noble than the vernal Furze
With golden baskets hung? Approach it not,
For every blossom has a troop of swords
Drawn to defend it."

While some authors represent the furze as a "shapeless and deformed shrub," others speak of it as a "British beauty," too rarely occupying a spot in the English shrubbery, and our poets seem no less at variance, for whilst Goldsmith talks of "the blossomed furze unprofitably gay," Cowper says it

"Decks itself with ornaments of gold."

Although this shrub blossoms at all seasons of the year, it is not very hardy, and the frost will nip it up sooner than most other plants, yet even from this season up to Christmas, if we have a few bright warm days, it is soon in its green and yellow robe again, but in the months of April and May it is in its greatest perfection, and may truly said to be "with golden baskets hung," for the profusion of bright yellow blossoms in those months gives it the appearance of a pile of gold.

"On me such beauty summer pours,
That I am covered o'er with flowers;
And when the frost is in the sky
My branches are so fresh and gay,
That you might look at me and say,
This plant can never die."

WORDSWORTH.

It is rare in the Highlands of Scotland, and unknown in Sweden, and Linnæus could scarcely preserve one alive there through the winter in a green house. It is reported that when he visited this country, and saw a heath covered with furze, he fell down on his knees enraptured with the sight.

Flowers in bloom during the month.

Unarmed Honewort, (*Ceratophyllum submersum*;) ditches, east and south of England; Small Fleabane, (*Pulicaria vulgaris*;) moist sandy places; Autumnal Squill, (*Scilla autumnalis*;) dry pastures, Cornwall, Bristol, Richmond, &c.; Common Meadow Saffron, (*Colchicum autumnale*;) meadows and pastures, Oxfordshire, Staffordshire, Monmouthshire; Saffron Crocus, (*Crocus sativus*;) meadows, Essex: (*Round cluster-headed Club-Rush*;) *Scirpus Holoschæmus*, sandy sea-shores.

NOVEMBER.

“ Enveloped in a murky cloud,
With tearful eyes and wailings loud
November takes his sullen road,
Thick with the forest honours strow'd :
A withered woodbine decks his brow,
His hand a sapless oaken bough.”

BISHOP MANT.

NOVEMBER is generally a gloomy and foggy month, “ in which,” remarks Leigh Hunt, “ we are said to hang and drown ourselves.”

Intervals of clear pleasant weather however frequently occur, and it is pleasant to find some fine days that come to contradict our sayings. It is pleasant to see a straggling primrose come back again ; it is pleasant to watch the greenfinches congregate ; it is pleasant to hear the plover whistle o’er the lea, and to listen to the deep notes of the wood-pigeon.

“ Now at the bleak November’s call
The genius of the storm awakes,
Flowers fade, and leaves deciduous fall—
The vision flies—the enchantment breaks,
And vanishes away.”

The woods are full of rich and harmonious beau-

ty, more lovely than even in the merry month of May. Nature is still sweetly adorned : in viewing the landscape our eyes fall on the orange tinge of the beech, the olive cast upon the thorn, the "ensanguined dogwood," the dark and sombre yew, the russet hazel, the deep sober elm, "the maple yellow leaved," the "fragrant birk," the pale green ash, and the dark red foliage of the cherry melting into every soft gradation of tint and shade, that "Flora in all her pride of bloom could scarcely equal."

November was originally the ninth month, and takes its name from *Novem*, nine. The Saxons styled it *wint monat*, wind month. It was formerly represented as a man clothed in a robe of changeable green and black, his head adorned with a garland of olive branches, holding in his right hand turnips and parsnips, and in his left the sign Sagittarius or the Archer.

"The melancholy days are come, the saddest of the year,

Of wailing winds and naked woods, and meadows brown and sere :

Heaped in the hollows of the grove the withered leaves lie dead,

They rustle in the eddying gust and to the rabbit's tread,

The robin and the wren are flown, and from the shrub the jay,

And from the wood top calls the crow through all the gloomy day.

“Where are the flowers, the fair young flowers that
lately sprung and stood
In brighter light and softer airs, a beauteous sister-
hood?
Alas they all are in their graves; the gentle race of
flowers
Are lying in their lowly beds, with the fair and good
of ours :
The rain is falling where they lie; but the cold No-
vember rain
Calls not from out the gloomy earth the lovely ones
again.

“The wind flower and the violet, they perished long
ago,
And the wild rose and the orchis died amid the sum-
mer glow;
But on the hill the golden rod, and the aster in the
wood,
And the yellow sun-flower by the brook in Autumn
beauty stood,
Till fell the frost from the clear cold heaven, as falls
the plague on man,
And the brightness of their smile is gone from upland
glade and glen.

“And now, when comes the calm mild day, as still
such days will come,
To call the squirrel and the bee from out their wintry
home,
Where the sound of the dropping nuts is heard though
all the leaves are still,
And twinkle in the smoky light the waters of the rill,
The south wind searches for the flowers whose fra-
grance late it bore,
And sighs to find them in the wood, and by the
stream no more.”

BRYANT.

During this gloomy month we must fly for refuge to a love of nature, for as Dr. Johnson observes in the Idler, "the distinction of seasons is produced only by imagination acting upon luxury. To temperance every day is bright, and and every hour is propitious to diligence. He that resolutely excites his faculties, or exerts his virtues, will soon make himself superior to the seasons, and may set at defiance the morning mist, and the evening damp, the blasts of the east, and the clouds of the south." Instead of looking for Spring with anxious and caring minds, enjoy the present day; there are pleasures even in November.

WALLFLOWER.

(*Cheiranthus Cheiri*.)

Class, Tetradynamia. Order, Siliquosa. Nat. Ord.,
Cruciferæ.

The Common Wallflower, which commences blooming in April, still throws out its bright golden blossoms on ruins and old walls, to enliven us at this cheerless season, and looking like hope above the tomb.

"Cheerful midst desolation's sadness—thou
Fair flower, art wont to grace the mould'ring pile,
And brightly bloom o'er ruin like a smile,
Reposing calm on age's furrowed brow,

Sweet monitor! an emblem sure I see
 Of virtue, and of virtue's power in thee,
 For though thou cheer'st the dull ruin's gloom,
 Still when thou'rt found upon the gay parterre,
 There thou art sweetest—fairest of the fair
 So virtue while it robs of death the tomb
 Shines in the crown, that youth and beauty wear,
 Being best of all the gems that glitter there."

The Wallflower is the emblem of "Fidelity in Misfortune." On and around the dilapidated walls it still shoots forth, whilst all other flowers that once graced the noble gardens have been swept away and gone to decay; this alone survives to cheer after the mouldering hand of time has desolated the noble structure.

"Not in the halls
 Of men, when garnished is the festal board,
 When flushed with pride, the castle's mighty lord
 Looks on its festoon'd walls.

"Not in the bower,
 The love-deck'd bower—of love Cheiranthus grows
 Nothing so humble there—'tis for the rose,
 Not for the poor Wallflower.

"Not in the spot
 Where the trim gardener plants his favorite flowers
 To be admired a few short sunny hours,
 And then to be forgot.

"No, lovely flower,
 Thy blossoms smile where pomp has pass'd away,
 Breathing their balmy fragrance o'er decay,
 Cheering misfortune's hour.

“ Like a true friend,
No smiling flatterer in a prosperous day,
But charming and consoling where decay
Tells of vain pleasure's end.”

How delicious is the breeze scented as it passes
over the bunches of Wallflowers that crown the old
castle's ivy covered walls.

“ The Wallflower, the Wallflower !
How beautiful it blooms,
It gleams above the ruin'd tower
Like sun-light over tombs ;
It sheds a halo of repose
Around the wrecks of time ;
To beauty give the flaunting rose,
The Wallflower is divine.

“ Flower of the solitary place !
Grey ruin's golden crown,
That lend'st a melancholy grace
To haunts of old renown ;
Thou mantlest o'er the battlements,
By strife or storm decay'd,
And fillest up each envious rent
Time's canker tooth has made.

“ Whither hath fled the choral band
That filled the abbey's nave,
Yon dark sepulchral yew tree stands
O'er many a level grave,
In the belfry's crevices the dove
Her young brood nurseth well,
Whilst thou, lone flower, dost shed above
A sweet decaying smell.”

“ In the season of the tulip cup,
When blossoms clothe the trees,
How sweet to throw the lattice up
And scent thee on the breeze !
The butterfly is then abroad,
The bee is on the wing,
And on the hawthorn by the road
The linnets sit and sing.

“ Sweet Wallflower, sweet Wallflower !
Thou conjurest up to me
Full many a soft and sunny hour,
Of boyhood's thoughtless glee ;
And joy from out the daisies grew
In woodland pastures green,
When summer skies were far more blue
Than since they e'er have been.

“ Now Autumn's pensive voice is heard,
Amid the yellow bowers ;
The robin is the regal bird,
And thou the queen of flowers !
He sings on the laburnum trees,
Amid the twilight dim,
And Araby ne'er gave the breeze
Such scents as thou to him.

“ Rich is the pink—the lily gay,
The rose is summer's guest,
Bland are thy charms when these decay,
Of flowers, first, last, and best ;
There may be gaudier in the bower,
And statelier on the tree,
But Wallflower, lov'd Wall-flower
Thou art the flower for me.”

A few years only have passed away since the ruined towers on which it has taken root, stood in their majestic strength, and now they lie a heap of ruins—a few centuries since the battlements were crowned with warriors, whose martial tread resounded from the parapets, and whose nodding plumes and gay pennons fluttered in the breeze, where now waves the poor Wallflower.

“Sweets of the wild, that breathe and bloom,
On this lone tower, this ivy'd wall,
Lend to the gale a rich perfume,
And grace the ruin in its fall,
Tho' doom'd remote from careless eye
To smile, to flourish and to die,
In solitude sublime,
O ever may the spring renew
Your balmy scent and glowing hue,
To deck the robe of time.

“Breathe, fragrance, breathe, enrich the air,
Tho' wasted on its wing unknown ;
Blow, flow'rets, blow ! tho' vainly fair,
Neglected and alone ;
These towers that long withstood the blast
These mossy towers are mouldering fast,
While Flora's children stay ;
To mantle o'er the lonely pile,
To gild destruction with a smile,
And beautify decay.”

This plant is indifferent as to situation, it flourishes in the smallest crevices between the stones of the wall, or in the garden, where it is often

planted for its agreeable perfume at an early season.

“ I love thy beauty there to mark,
Thy lingering light to see,
When all is growing drear and dark,
Except the West and thee.

“ For then with brightness caught from heaven
An emblem true thou art,
Of love’s enduring lustre given
To cheer a lonely heart.

“ Of love, whose deepest tenderest worth,
Till tried was all unknown,
Which owes to sympathy its birth,
And seeketh not its own.

“ But by its self abandonment,
When cares and griefs appal,
Appears as if from Heaven ’twere sent
To compensate for all.”

BARTON.

Modern poets have not been backward in acknowledging the merits of this beautiful and fragrant flower, and nearly all touch upon the tenacity with which it clings to old buildings, and therefore appropriately made it the emblem of “ Friendship in adversity,” since the devastations of time that overthrows the structures cannot drive the flower from its ruins.

“ To me it speaks of loveliness,
That passes not with youth,
Of beauty which decay can bless,
Of constancy and truth.

“ But in adversity's dark hour,
When glory is gone by,
It then exerts its gentle power
The scene to beautify.”

WINTER.

“And, see! green Autumn dies away;
The pallid sire is come;
The plains his shiv’ring rule obey,
And ev’ry wave is dumb!”

WINTER.



“ See Winter comes, to rule the varied year,
Sullen and sad, with all his rising train,
Vapours, and clouds, and storms.”

THE Almighty hath blessed the Spring and Summer with sunshine, and our earth has been carpetted with flowers of every hue, and of the most delightful fragrance. He hath brought forth the fruits of Autumn, and left man to gather them in ; and if we have not garnered in our store, we are but disregarders of his commands and unmindful of his bounty : and for the repose of nature He hath appointed the Winter, and that repose hath its charms.

“ No more the morn with tepid rays,
Unfolds the flowers of various hue ;
Morn spreads no more the genial blaze,
Nor gentle eve distils the dew.

“ The lingering hours prolong the night,
Usurping darkness shares the day ;
Her mists restrain the force of light,
And Phœbus holds a doubtful sway.

“ By gloomy twilight half reveal’d,
With sighs we view the hoary hill,
The leafless wood, the naked field,
The snow-topt cot, the frozen rill.

“ No music warbles through the grove,
No vivid colours paint the plain ;
No more with devious steps I rove
Through verdant paths now sought in vain.”

Let those who rejoice in the fulness and freshness of youth, listen to the voice of the closing year ; and pause in the summer of their days, and listen to the moral of winter. The close of the year is full of instruction, and moves us to read in it lessons of virtue and religion. As the white snow descends from the heavens to the earth, and warms and dissolves upon the cold and wintry ground, so may the pure mercy of providence drop upon us in the winter of our days.

“ ’Tis not in Spring, in Summer, in the sun,
The cloudless sky, and the reposing storm
The soul can glean such lessons,—these awake
Thoughts of light interest ; vacant joyfulness ;
Fantastic visions ; but the dim aspect
Of all earthly beauties fading—the hoarse winds—
The heavy clouds—and the unsheltered fields,
Call to the silent home the wandering thoughts ;
Hushes unruly passions, quenches pride ;
And in a still voice whispers to the heart,
“ Prepare, for thy departure is at hand.”

There is something extremely melancholy in the fall of the leaf, by which process the trees are

stripped of all their beauty, and left as so many monuments of decay and desolation, and leads us to reflect that all the pleasures of this world will endure but for a season, and that in a few years they will flee away, and leave us tenants of the tomb.

“The dead leaves strew the forest walk,
And withered are the pale wild flowers,
The frost hangs blackening on the stalk,
The dew-drops fall in frozen showers,
Gone are the spring’s green sprouting bowers,
Gone summer’s rich and mantling vines,
And Autumn with her yellow hours,
On hill and plain no longer shines.”

DECEMBER.

“ In winter awful, lovely in the spring,
Romantic Cambria, hail ! to thee I sing ;
No longer now I view thy verdant trees,
Thy joyous harvest waving in the breeze ;
Thy mountain streams, thy vallies filled with corn,
Thy larks which fly to greet the roseate morn ;
Thy summer sun cheering all nature round,
Thy meads with Flora’s early primrose crown’d ;
The stores Pomona’s liberal hand bestows,
And from her lap in rich profusion throws ;
Of these no more I sing ; those cheerful days
Are fled, and Winter claims my pensive lays,
Yet even in Winter charms may oft be viewed,
If by the philosophic mind pursued ;
Yes, even in chilling frost and blustering wind,
The grandeur of the Almighty power we find.
Do not the winds aloud his praise declare ?
Look at the snowy hills, we view him there !
Whether by cold we’re nipped, or heat oppress’d,
In either is the great supreme confess’d.
But let me now assume the festive song,
And to the lyre let sportive notes belong,
For all the endearments of the social hours,
Shall bless December’s consecrated bowers.”

“ Now though joyful summer’s fled,
Why regret her garlands dead,
For in the winter we can see
The beauties of variety,

And if 'twere summer all the year,
Variety would ne'er appear ;
But in the seasons moving round,
If sought for, she is always found,
Then though summer's reign is fled,
Mourn not if the flowers be dead ;
Tasteless would she ever be
Wanting sweet variety ;
Hail ! then December's pleasing reign,
In the wild enraptured strain,
And let the winter sacred be
To mirth and hospitality."

The emblematical representation of December, was that of an old man with a grim countenance, covered with furs, with several caps upon his head, and over them a Turkish turban ; a red nose, and icicles hanging from his beard ; on his back he carried a bundle of holly and ivy, and in one of his hands, which were in furred gloves, he led a *Goat*, in token of the sun entering the tropic of *Capricornus* on the 22nd of the month.

Spencer's picture of December runs thus :—

"And after him came next the chill December ;
Yet he, through merry feasting which he made,
And great bonfires, did not the cold remember ;
His Saviour's birth so much his mind did glad,
Upon a shaggy bearded goat he rode,
The same wherewith Dan Jove in tender years,
They say, was nourished by the Idean maid ;
And in his hand a broad deep bowl he bears,
Of which he freely drinks a health to all his peers."

The aged and hoary moralist of the year has at

length arrived, nature seems to have retired to cradle her energies for the forth-coming spring ; the foliage of the trees is gone, our eye does not now rest upon its beauty, but we may still contemplate the wonders of the ramifications of their boughs ; the security of their buds ; and the variety of their barks. The year now trembles in its decline ; the leafless and sapless trunks of the trees now stand like vegetable anatomies ; the bloom of spring ; the richness of summer ; the fruits of autumn are past, and all that cheered those sunny days is changed, and December is announced to us in the hoarse winds, and in the presence of the terrible frosts ; but there is, as illustrated in our opening verse on this month, an advantage in the temporary lessening of the more obvious charms of nature, for when they are again unveiled by the young spring, we are assuredly more gratified at their re-appearance than if we had never missed them. Spring would not be so pleasant, but for the winter that preceded it ; and it is possible that the frost, and snow, and darkness, and storm, may even have a tendency to improve the hue or scent of the floral favourites which they conceal, for it has been remarked that

“ In climes full of sunshine, though splendid their dyes,
Yet faint is the odour the flowers shed about ;
’Tis the clouds and the mists of our own weeping skies
That calls the full spirit of fragrancy out.”

Even this inclement month is not without its

charms, for a few flowers now burst forth to enliven it, in addition to the evergreens. The oak, beech, and hornbeam yet retain their leaves, the ash its keys, and the scarlet berries of the holly, and the white ones of the misletoe, are now conspicuous, and particularly valued.

“How happily, how happily, the flowers die away!
Oh could we but return to earth as easily as they!
Just live a life of sunshine, of innocence, and bloom,
Then drop without decrepitude or pain into the tomb!

“The gay and glorious creatures! they ‘neither toil
nor spin,’
Yet lo! what goodly raiments they’re all apparell’d in,
No tears are on their beauty, but dewy gems more
bright
Than ever brow of Eastern queen endiadem’d with
light.

“The young rejoicing creatures! their pleasures never
pall,
Nor lose in sweet contentment, because so sweet to
all!
The dew, the showers, the sunshine, the balmy blessed
air,
Spend nothing of their freshness, though all may freely
share.

“The happy careless creatures! of time they take no
heed;
Nor weary of its creeping, nor tremble at its speed;
Nor sigh with sick impatience, and wish the light
away,
Nor when ’tis gone, cry dolefully “would God that it
were day.”

“And when their hues are over, they droop away to rest,

Unconscious of the penal doom on holy nature's breast,
No pain have they in dying—no shrinking from decay—
Oh ! could we but return to earth as easily as they.”

C. BOWLES.

December still retains the original name assigned to it in the old Alban and first Roman Calendars adopted by Romulus, in both of which it was the tenth, or last month of the year. Its appellation is composed of *Decem*, ten, and *imber*, a shower.

“Ah ! drear is now the season's power,
And dull the lazy footed hour,
To them whose mind the sway confess
Apathetic listlessness ;
Nor theirs the body's boon employ,
Nor theirs the mind's sublimer joy.

The close of the year brings with it one great consolation—the days begin to lengthen, and

“The storms of wintery time will quickly pass,
And one unbounded spring encircle all.”

Amid all December's sombreness, there are however some lively spots and cheering aspects.—The snipes haunt the marshy ground, the larks congregate and talk to each other—the wagtails twinkle about ponds of water—the thrush occasionally puts forth a plaintive note, as if half afraid of the sound of his own voice, and the robin sings more delightfully than he has done during the other months.

THE HOLLY.

(Ilex Aquifolium.)

Class, Tetrandria. Order, Tetragynia. N. O., Illicineæ.

This beautiful evergreen tree, has smooth greyish bark, the leaves are very glossy, the upper ones being entire, and the lower spinous or prickly. This difference in the foliage, has not escaped the notice of poets, as seen in the following beautiful lines written by Southey on the subject :—

“O reader hast thou ever stood to see
 The Holly tree?
 The eye that contemplates it, well perceives
 Its glossy leaves;
 Ordered by an intelligence so wise,
 As might confound the atheist’s sophistries.

“Below a circling fence its leaves are seen,
 Wrinkled and keen;
 No grazing cattle through their prickly round
 Can reach to wound;
 But as they grow where nothing is to fear,
 Smooth and unarmed the pointless leaves appear.

“I love to view these things with curious eyes,
 And moralize;
 And in this of the Holly tree,
 Can emblems see,
 Wherewith perchance to make a pleasant rhyme,
 One which may profit in the after time.

“Thus, though abroad, perchance I may appear
Harsh and austere,
To those who on my leisure would intrude,
Reserved and rude,
Gentle at home amid my friends I'd be,
Like the high leaves upon the Holly tree.

“And should my youth, as youth is apt, I know,
Some harshness show ;
All vain asperities I day by day
Would wear away,
Till the smooth temper of my age should be
Like the high leaves upon the Holly tree.

“And as, when all the summer trees are seen,
So bright and green,
The Holly leaves a sober hue display,
Less bright than they ;
And when the bare and wintry woods we see,
What then so cheerful as the Holly tree.

“So serious should my youth appear among
The thoughtless throng,
So would I seem among the young and gay
More grave than they,
That in my age as cheerful I might be
As the green winter of the Holly tree.”

The Holly has long been made use of at the feasts of the nativity, for ornamenting churches and dwelling houses. It appears to have been first used by the early christians of Rome, and was most likely used for decorating the churches at Christmas, because it was customary among the Romans to send boughs of holly during the great festival of the saturnalia, which occurred about

that period, as emblematical of good wishes, with the gifts they presented to their friends at that season, and the holly came thus to be considered as an emblem of peace and goodwill. The use made of it in dressing up dwellings at the festive season, has thus been sung :—

“ Then each homestead decked with Holly,
Bay, and ivy leaves are seen,
Nature’s brow of melancholy,
Decking with a chaplet green.”

And another poet writes,

“ Above the Holly glads the scene,
With prickly leaves of glossy green,
And girt with balls of scarlet dye,
Boon nature’s provident supply
Of banquet for the eager bird,
Unless to village church transferred,
It lends its brilliant colours gay
To grace the Saviour’s natal day.”

MANT.

In England, perhaps the earliest record of the custom of decorating churches and houses with holly, is in a carol in praise of this tree, in the time of Henry VI. In the language of flowers the holly is the symbol of foresight and caution.

The disciples of Zoroaster, the author of fire worship, believed that the sun never shadows the holly tree ; and the followers of that philosopher, who still remain in Persia and India, are said to throw water impregnated with holly bark in the face of a new born child.

THE MISTLETOE.

(Viscum Album.)

Class, Dioecia. Order, Tetrandria. N. O., Lorantheæ.

This is a parasite, growing mostly on apple trees, although it is occasionally found on oak, lime, and maple, the leaves are oblong lance shaped, the stems forked, and the heads of the flowers are seated in the axils of the leaves, and are succeeded by white berries. The whole plant is of a yellow hue, thick and succulent ; birdlime is made from the bark and berries. This plant was sacred to our ancestors, the Druids believed it to be the peculiar gift of heaven, and that it contained a divine virtue. It was therefore sought for on the oak on the sixth day of the moon with great earnestness and anxiety, and its discovery was hailed with raptures of joy. As soon as the Druids were informed of the fortunate discovery, they commenced their sacrifices under the oak, to which they fastened two white bulls by the horns. The Arch Druid, attended by a great number of people, ascended the oak, dressed in white, and with a consecrated golden knife, cropped the mistletoe, which he received in his robe—and if any part of the plant touched the ground, it was considered to be the

omen of some dreadful misfortune which was about to fall on the land. After securing the sacred plant, he descended the tree, the bulls were sacrificed, and the Deity invoked to bless his own gift, and render it efficacious for those distempers for which it should be administered. The branches of the mistletoe were dipped in water by the principal Druid, and parted among the people, as a preservative against witchcraft and diseases.—In Scandinavian mytholgy, Loke, the evil spirit is said to have made the arrow of mistletoe branches with which he wounded Balder, (Apollo,) who was charmed against injury from every thing which sprang from earth, fire, or water; but the mistletoe, springing from neither, was found to be fatal, and Balder was not restored to the world till by a general intercession of the other gods. The magical properties of the mistletoe are mentioned both by Virgil and Ovid. In the dark ages a similar opinion of its power prevailed; and even to the present day, the peasants of Holstein, and some other countries, call the mistletoe the “spectre’s wand,” from the belief that holding a branch of mistletoe, will not only enable a man to see ghosts, but to force him to speak to them. In the feudal ages it was gathered with great solemnity on Christmas eve, and hung up in the great hall of dwellings with shouts and rejoicing :—

“On Christmas eve the bells were rung;
On Christmas eve the mass was sung;

That only night in all the year
Saw the stoled priest the chalice near;
The damsel donned her kirtle sheen;
The hall was dress'd with holly green;
Forth to the woods did merry men go
To gather in the mistletoe;
Then opened wide the Baron's hall,
To vassal, tenant, serf, and all."

The custom of kissing under the mistletoe at Christmas has been handed down to us by our Saxon ancestors, who, on the restoration of Balder, dedicated the plant to his mother, Friga, (their Venus), to place it entirely under her controul, and to prevent it from being again used against her as an instrument of mischief.

THE IVY.

(*Hedera helix.*)

Class, Pentandria. Order, Monogynia. N. O., Araliaceæ.

This climbing shrub blooms during the month of October, and is now covered with large black green berries; we prefer noticing it in this month, because it is at this season of the year that our attention is usually drawn to the plant, in consequence of its bright evergreen leaves being so generally used at the festive season, for decorating our banquets, and at public rejoicings.

The ivy has very long creeping stems, which throw out numerous roots or claspers, by which they firmly adhere to old ruins, rocks, and trunks of trees. The leaves are very shining dark green, with three or five lobes, and often veined with whitish lines. The flowers are small, and of a pale green colour, with reflexed petals.—This plant is always to be found clinging to the ruins of old castles, which recalls to our mind the traditions and history of by-gone times. Mrs. Hemans in her poem on “the ruin and its flowers,” writes

“Proud castle! tho’ thy days are flown,
When once thy towers in glory shone;
When music thro’ thy turrets rung,
When banners o’er thy ramparts hung,
Tho’ midst thine arches frowning lone,
Stern desolation rears his throne;
And silence deep and awful reign,
Where echoed once the choral strain;
Yet oft, dark ruin, lingering here
The muse will hail thee with a tear;
Here where the moonlight quiv’ring beams,
And through the fringing ivy streams,
And softens every shade sublime,
And mellows every tint of time;
Oh! here shall contemplation love
Unseen and undisturbed to rove;
And bending o’er some mossy tomb
Where valour sleeps, or beauties bloom,
Shall weep for glory’s transient day
And grandeur’s evanescent ray;
And listening to the swelling blast
Shall wake the spirit of the past,

Call up the forms of ages fled,
Of warriors, and of minstrels dead;
Who sought the field, who struck the lyre,
With all ambition's kindling fire!"

In "Louden's Arboretum," we find that "the ivy was dedicated by the ancients to Bacchus, whose statues are generally found crowned with a wreath of its leaves;" and as a favourite plant of the god of wine, its praises have been sung by almost all poets, whether ancient or modern. Many reasons have been given for the consecration to Bacchus of this plant. Some poets say that it was because the ivy has the effect of dissipating the fumes of wine; others because it was once his favorite youth Cissus; and others because it is said that the ivy, if planted in vineyards will destroy the vines, and it was doing an acceptable service to that plant to tear it up and wreath it into chaplets and garlands.—The most probable, however seems to be, that the ivy is found at Nyssa, the reputed birth-place of Bacchus, and in no other part of India.

"Oh! how could fancy crown with thee,
In ancient days the god of wine,
And bid thee at the banquet be
Companion of the vine!
Ivy! thy home is where each sound
Of revelry hath long been o'er,
Where song and beaker once went round,
But now are known no more;
Where long-fallen gods recline,
There the place is thine.

“The Roman on the battle plains,
Where kings before his eagles bent,
With thee, amidst exulting strains,
Shadow'd the victor's tent ;
Though shining there in deathless green,
Triumphally thy boughs might wave ;
Better thou lovest the silent scene
Around the victor's grave ;
Urn and sculpture half-divine
Yield their place to thine.

“The cold halls of the regal dead,
Where lone the Italian sun-beams dwell,
Where hollow sounds the lightest tread—
Ivy they know thee well !
And far above the festal vine
Thou wav'st, where once proud banners hung,
Where mouldering turrets crest the Rhine,
The Rhine, still fresh and young,
Tower and rampart o'er the Rhine,
Ivy, all are thine.

“High from the fields of air look down,
Those eyries of a vanished race,
Where harp, and battle, and renown,
Have passed and left no trace ;
But thou art there serenely bright,
Meeting the mountain storms with bloom,
Thou that wilt climb the loftiest height,
Or crown the lowliest tomb.
Ivy, ivy, all are thine
Palace, hearth, and shrine.

“'Tis all the same ; our pilgrim tread
O'er classic plains, through deserts free ;
On the mute paths of ages fled
Still meets decay and thee ;

And still let man his fabrics rear,
August in beauty, stern in power,
Days past--thou ivy never fear !
And thou shalt have thy dower ;
All are thine, or must be thine,
Temple, pillar, shrine.

HEMANS.

The ancient Greek priests presented a wreath of ivy to newly married persons, as a symbol of the closeness of the tie which ought to bind them together ; and Ptolemy Philopater, king of Egypt, ordered all the Jews, who would abjure their religion, and attach themselves to the superstitions of his country, to be branded with an ivy leaf. The ivy is the badge of the clan Gordon. This plant is symbolical of friendship, from the closeness of its adherance to the trees on which it has once fixed itself, and has therefore become a favorite device for seals, and amongst the number we have observed, a sprig of ivy with the motto " I die where I attach myself," and a fallen tree covered with ivy, with the words " even ruin cannot separate us."

The holly, mistletoe, and ivy, are the plants intimately associated with the close of the year, the gay blossoms of autumn have all departed, and the early ones of spring have not yet made their appearance, excepting perhaps a straggling primrose, which has dared to rise its adventurous head in some sheltered situation. The evergreens are

therefore appropriated for the decorations of our houses during the holiday time of Christmas.

“ Oh ! Christmas, welcome to thy happy reign,
And all the social virtues to thy train ;
The Cambrian harper hails thy festive time
With sportive melody, and artless rhyme ;
Unlike the bards who sung in days of old,
And all the legends of tradition told ;
In gothic castles deck'd with banner's gay,
At solemn festivals they pour'd the lay ;
Their poor descendant wanders thro' the vales,
And gains a welcome by his artless tales,
He finds a seat in every humble cot,
And hospitality in every spot ;
'Tis now he bids the sprightly harp resound,
To bless the hours with genial plenty crown'd,
And now the gay domestic joys to prove
The smiles of peace, festivity, and love ;
Oh ! Christmas welcome to thy hallow'd reign,
And all the social virtues in thy train.”

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